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THE CASE FOR OBAMA

By TIM DICKINSON

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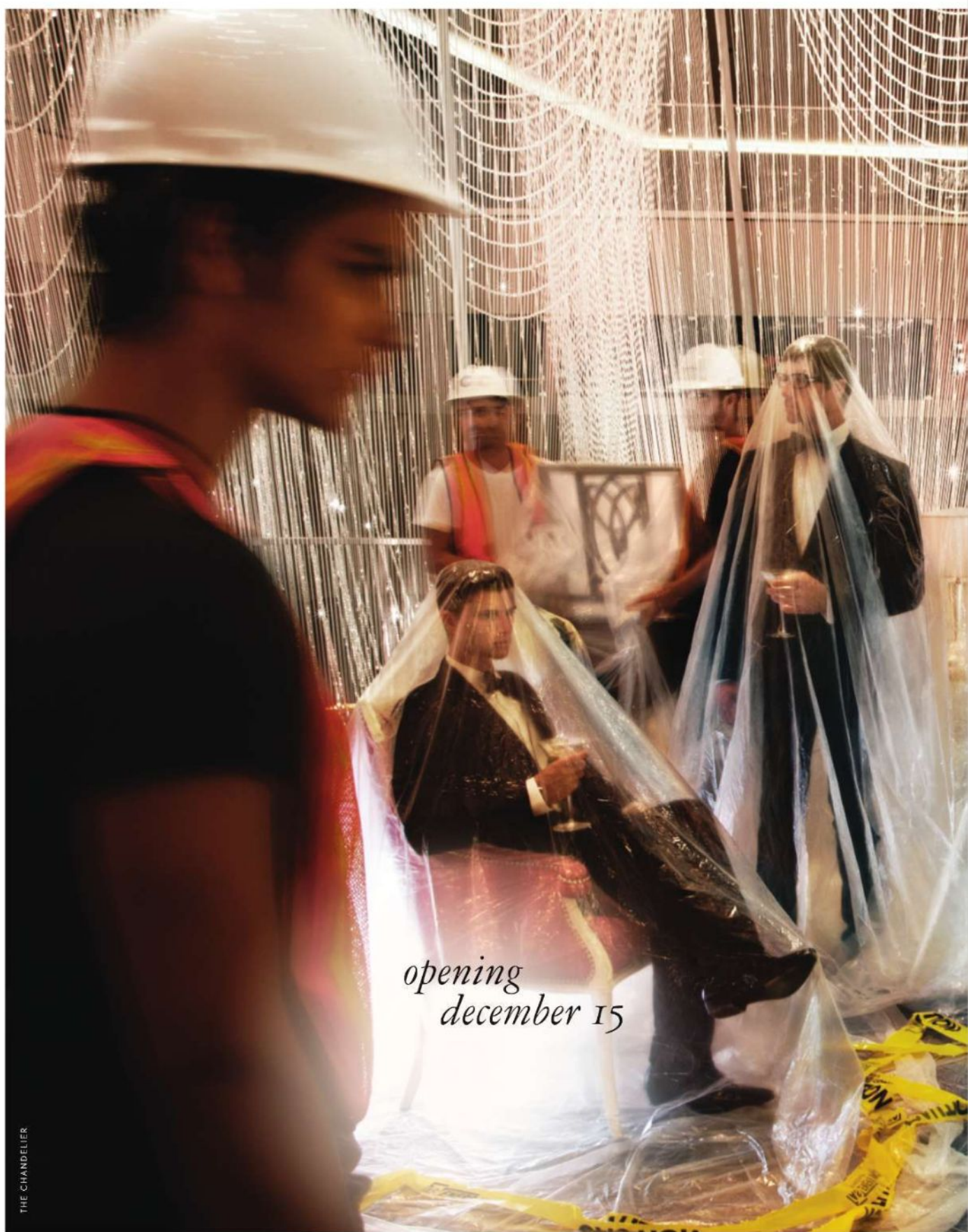
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*Bless their hearts. And
I'll do the best I can
to fulfill their needs."*

Keith Richards
at his home in
Connecticut,
September 9th

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ON THE COVER Keith Richards photographed in Connecticut, September 9th, 2010, by **Peter Lindbergh**.

Styling by Maryam Malakpour at CLM. Grooming by Pamela Taylor. Shirt and jacket by Costume National.



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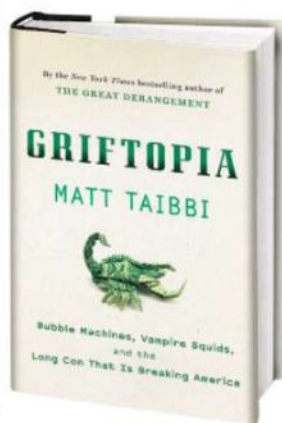
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Richards in 1964

Excerpt: New Matt Taibbi Book

Read how America is auctioning off its highways and harbors to Wall Street and Middle Eastern interests in this exclusive preview of *Griftopia: Bubble Machines, Vampire Squids, and the Long Con That Is Breaking America*, out in November (Spiegel & Grau).



Keith Opens Up

Check out more on Keith Richards' remarkable memoir, *Life*: ROLLING STONE senior writer David Fricke interviews Richards and his collaborator, James Fox. Plus: A full report from the Rolling Stones guitarist's reading at the New York Public Library on October 29th.

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Up-to-the-minute music news, interviews and exclusives

CONCERT COVERAGE

Report from the Buffalo Springfield reunion at Neil Young's Bridge School benefit.

ROLLING STONE LIVE

Josh Homme gives a private in-office performance.

BAND OF THE WEEK

Meet the rising singer-song-writer Christina Perri.

GALLERIES

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REVIEWS

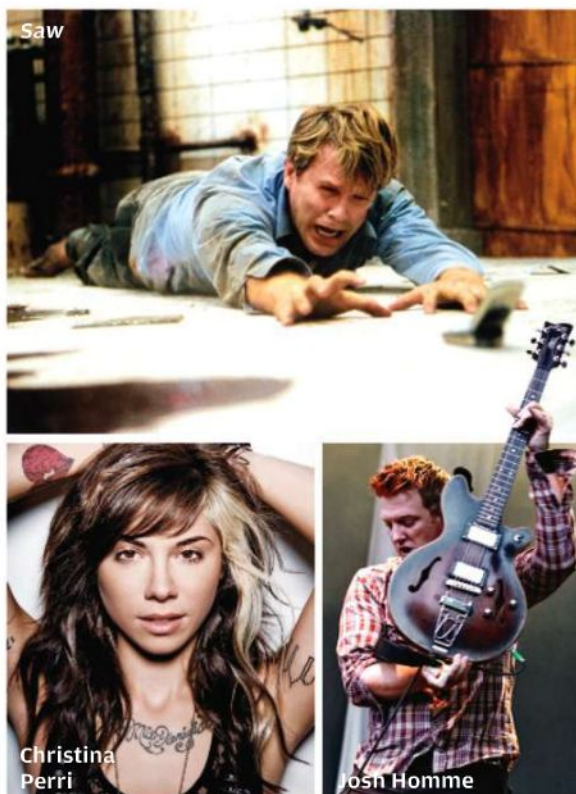
Online-exclusive write-ups of the latest albums and singles.

BLOGS

Matt Taibbi on politics, David Fricke on music and Rob Sheffield on pop culture

RANDOM NOTES

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Christina Perri

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Correspondence

{ Love Letters & Advice }



Troubled Waters

RARELY HAVE I READ SUCH an engaging profile of an artist as Brian Hiatt's portrait of Roger Waters ["Back to The Wall," RS 1114]. The piece matches up precisely with how I imagined Waters to be and also shows his rich, textured layers and the sides of him that I never knew existed.

Craig Postons, London, Ontario

HIATT'S BRILLIANT STORY allowed Waters to once again show the world that he remains the same talented spoiled child he has always been.

Andrew Bloom, New York

IT WOULD SEEM THE ONLY thing bigger than Roger Waters' new production of *The Wall* is his insufferable ego. How dare he compare himself to Picasso. If Waters wants to really please his

fans, then he should just shut the fuck up and apologize to David Gilmour for attempting to claim the name Pink Floyd for himself.

Jeff Sterling, Birch Bay, WA

TWO THINGS HAPPENED TO me when I got the Waters issue out of the mailbox. First thing I thought was, "Fuck, Roger Waters died!" The second, after I realized he wasn't dead, was, "Why isn't he in his underwear, or at least sucking on an ice cream cone?" Thank you for confounding my expectations, at least until next issue.

Geoff Logsdon, Jefferson, GA

The editors reply: We thought about asking Waters to pose shirtless, but decided to spare you.

Climate SOS

BEN WALLACE-WELLS' "ON Thin Ice" [RS 1114] is one of the best articles about global warming I've ever read. This is the kind of reporting that is badly needed.

Brian Eisley, Santa Rosa, CA

BP's Bankruptcy

MATT TAIBBI ONCE AGAIN shows us the grave consequences that lax oversight can bring with "BP's Shockwaves" [RS 1114]. BP's careless operation and the shadowy world of derivatives should be enough

to make even the most right-wing pundits change their tune on deregulation.

*Dan Renaud
East Greenbush, NY*

TAIBBI'S STORY REGARDING BP is important. About \$5 trillion in derivatives trading takes place on regulated exchanges. However, roughly \$600 trillion of the trading talked about in the story goes on totally in the dark, out of the view of regulators. That's what led to the financial collapse two years ago. The new Wall Street Reform Act signed

"It seems the only thing bigger than Roger Waters' new production of 'The Wall' is his insufferable ego."

by President Obama in July will change that, but only if Congress approves the funds we need to regulate these dark markets.

*Bart Chilton, Commissioner
Commodity Futures Trading
Commission, Washington, DC*

Saving the Music

I READ PAUL MCGUINNESS' "How to Save the Music Business" [RS 1114] with great interest, hoping to hear words of wisdom. Instead, what I got was the same panic I have been hearing from the major labels

since the Seventies. Kids are downloading free albums, and yeah, that's bad. But they're casual fans, and casual fans don't drive sales. It's the collector, the fanatic, the true music fans who will save this industry.

Derek Cornish, Centereach, NY

MCGUINNESS WROTE ONE of the best articles I have ever read concerning piracy and the music business. I agree with Paul – I buy music because I want the people who are responsible for it to get paid.

Robert Lazaneo, via the Internet

THE REASON "FREE" IS THE prevailing way of acquiring music is because the labels charge too much for albums. Why? Greed. Instead of viewing the fan as a villain, the industry should embrace its fans and remember the adage "The customer is always right."

Keith Creighton, Seattle

THERE WAS ONE FACTUAL inaccuracy in the excellent article by Paul McGuinness. It was not the first article he had written for RS. Around 1972, when Paul was a student in Dublin, RS published an equally excellent article by him on an Irish band called Horslips (once described as a cross between Led Zeppelin and the Chieftains). I remember it vividly, as I was the manager of the band.

Michael Deeny, via the Internet

Paul McGuinness responds: In 1972 I recall that I used the nom de plume Paul MacInnes in an attempt to disguise my true identity (I was a friend of the band Horslips). As far as I know, the piece ran only in the U.K. edition of RS.

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What They're Saying

The buzz about "Back to 'The Wall'" [RS 1114]

IN OUR COVER STORY ON Roger Waters' revival of the *Wall* tour, writer Brian Hiatt noted that one moment in the performance – when a plane drops bombs that look like Stars of David immediately followed by bombs shaped like dollar signs – could be construed as anti-Semitic. Waters told RS that was not his intention, but others felt differently. The president of



the Anti-Defamation League, Abraham Foxman, issued a press release blasting Waters for "dredging up the worst age-old anti-Semitic stereotype about Jews and their supposed obsession with making money."

Waters has since switched the order of the images and released a statement saying, "There are no hidden meanings in the order or juxtaposition of these symbols."

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Rock & Roll



DOUBLE FANTASY
Gaga and Yoko
onstage in L.A.

Lady Gaga, Yoko Pay Tribute to John Lennon

LADY GAGA AND I SPEAK THE SAME language," says Yoko Ono. "It's performance art. She's coming from the other side, but it's still performance art." So Ono and Sean Lennon invited the pop superstar to participate in the "We Are Plastic Ono Band" shows they staged at L.A.'s Orpheum Theatre in early October in celebration of John Lennon's 70th birthday. The two-night run featured Sean and Yoko tackling Plastic Ono Band tunes with an all-star cast that included

Iggy Pop, Perry Farrell, RZA and Carrie Fisher (who sang Ono's "What a Bastard the World Is"). Taking the stage on the second night in a see-through crystal-beaded jumpsuit, Gaga joined Sean and Yoko for a stomping version of Yoko's dance-club hit "The Sun Is Down!" and the freaked-out blues of "It's Been Very Hard" — culminating in a dueling-wail vocal attack from both women. "John would've loved it," Ono says. "He's like me — he went for wild things. And she's wild."

DAVID BROWNE

Farm Aid Turns 25 With All-Star Jam

Willie, Dave Matthews, Steven Tyler rock for family farmers

By Austin Scaggs

ON THE MORNING OF Farm Aid's 25th-anniversary concert in Milwaukee, as rain pelted his tour bus, Willie Nelson reminisced about how it began. "I remember hearing Bob Dylan say at Live Aid, 'Wouldn't it be nice if some of this money stayed here for the farmers?'" said Nelson, holding court at the dining table, with a pack of Zig-Zags and a lighter in his left hand. "I said, 'The man's right! We should take care of our own!'"

Eleven hours and 16 acts later (including fellow Farm Aid board members Neil Young, John Mellencamp and Dave Matthews, as well as Jeff Tweedy, Norah Jones, Band of Horses and Kenny Chesney), Nelson closed the 25th Farm Aid with a surprise guest: Steven Tyler, who injected new life into the marathon concert and inspired the loudest roar of the day from the crowd of 35,000. The pair duetted on the Tyler-penned country ballad "One Time Too Many" and Aerosmith's "Once Is Enough" as their Farm Aid co-stars watched from the wings. "Just to sit on the side of the stage and watch Willie is the coolest," said Matthews. "He's my hero."

With rain falling and temperatures in the 40s, a decision was made early



HOME GROWN Matthews, Young and Mellencamp before the show (top); Tyler and Nelson duet on "One Time Too Many."

to close Miller Park's retractable roof. "It's like playing in a giant plastic ball," Matthews remarked, but Young used the stadium's booming acoustics to his advantage, creating swirls of feedback during his solo electric set on classics like "Down by the River," "Ohio" and "Long May You Run." "Factory farms are the reason why we have food alerts," Young told the crowd. "They are the reason why we have dying people and disease." Young – joined by Matthews, Mellencamp and Nelson – closed his set with the 1970s jam "Homegrown," a Farm Aid staple.

Matthews – in his 13th Farm Aid performance since 1995 – appeared with guitarist Tim

Reynolds and hit on "All Along the Watchtower," "Don't Drink the Water" and cuts from his 2003 solo album, *Some Devil*. "There is a sincerity in this organization that is unlike a lot of charitable concerts," Matthews said, hanging out in his tour bus. "Like Live Earth – that left a bad taste in my mouth. But with Farm Aid there's an honesty and a real clear goal that is to raise awareness about the unforgivable way that the government treats the small farmers in America, where a majority of subsidies go to giant corporations and big agribusinesses."

Jones, alternating between guitar and piano, sauntered through "Come Away With Me," Johnny Cash's "Cry, Cry,




Cry" and "How Many Times Have You Broken My Heart" (Hank Williams' lyrics set to music by Jones). After celebrating her first Farm Aid in the dugout with a vodka cocktail, Jones re-emerged for the all-star finale of "Good Hearted Woman," a song Nelson wrote with Waylon Jennings.

This year's event raised more than \$2 million, bringing Farm Aid's 25-year total to

\$39 million. "I was seven when I watched the first Farm Aid on TV," marveled Band of Horses singer Ben Bridwell backstage. "I've known about it longer than I've known my colors or how to do long division. You say yes to just be in these dudes' company, but the fact that we're in this for the most noble of causes makes it so fucking cool."

"As the family farmer goes, so goes America," Mellencamp said, before tearing through "Pink Houses," "Save Some Time to Dream" and "Scarecrow," which he also performed at the inaugural benefit, held in Champaign, Illinois, in 1985. Before his set, as he puffed on

American Spirits in his Airstream trailer outside the venue, Mellencamp reminisced about that first show. "Everybody in the fucking world was there," he said. "And I remember, for 45 minutes after the show, I had to wait on the bus for Willie, who was out there signing autographs. When he finally got on the bus, I asked, 'What the fuck took so long, Willie?' And he goes, 'Something you should think about. I've got to take care of the people who take care of us.'" Mellencamp, who noted that Farm Aid is the longest-running music charity in history, also had a request: "Willie deserves the Nobel Peace Prize. We're all just Willie's little helpers." 

What Farm Aid Has Accomplished Looking back at 25 years of advocacy

In 1985, no one involved in the first Farm Aid – which featured Willie Nelson, Bob Dylan, Tom Petty, Neil Young, Johnny Cash and dozens of others – was thinking beyond that initial concert. "We thought, 'As soon as people see what's wrong, there's going to be an outpouring of support,'" says Farm Aid executive director Carolyn Mugar. The show raised \$9 million, but the farm crisis didn't go away: There were just 1.9 million farms left in America by 1992, down from 5 million



Dylan, Mike Campbell, Nelson and Petty onstage at the first Farm Aid, in 1985

in 1950. "We don't want to have it every year," says Mugar, "but we had to pick up the pieces."

With the \$39 million Farm Aid has raised since 1985, the organiza-

tion typically awards 50 grants a year between \$5,000 and \$20,000. The money goes toward organizations like Family Farm Defenders that advocate on behalf of

family farmers. By way of the Farmer Resource Network website, Farm Aid also helps farmers get new loans, restructure debts and hold off creditors. "That kind of tedious but crucial work can save a family farm," says associate director Glenda Yoder. Farm Aid's toll-free hot line has also dealt with more than its share of suicide calls from distraught farmers.

The mission has been a massive success: With rising interest in organic and locally grown food, the number of farms is

now back up to 2.2 million, with 76,000 added in the past few years. "There's a positive, growing awareness about small farms and the products they produce and the way they treat the land that Farm Aid has had something to do with," says board member Dave Matthews. "In my own house, my kids don't reach for Doritos and drink Coke when they're thirsty. They know what good food is, and I think that's what Farm Aid is about."

DAVID BROWNE

Kid Rock Battles Imposters From Vegas to New Orleans

"It's creepy any way you slice it," Rock says about the phonies who steal his look to get girls and gifts

EARLIER THIS YEAR, Kid Rock's friend Uncle Kracker was having dinner in a Detroit restaurant when his wife thought she saw their buddy across the room. "The guy had the look down to a T," says Kracker. "He wouldn't take off his glasses in the restaurant, and he had the beaver-skin hat, the glasses, the hair, the necklace with the

meet women. "It's creepy any way you slice it," says Rock. "If you can grow a goatee, you're kind of thin, you can fucking tuck your hair up under a hat and put on aviators, you pretty much have the look."

For years, Rock was flattered by the armies of lookalikes in the audience at his concerts, but recent stories of aggressive and mean imposters are bumming him out – especially after photos spread across the Internet (and into the pages of *ROLLING STONE*) of "Kid Rock" groping Tila Tequila at

variety shows – which is how professional Kid Rock impersonator Craig Kory found himself partying with Tequila at the opening of the Hustler Mega Club last month. "I'm not some guy from Idaho who's hanging out on a farm with a Kid Rock hat on trying to get attention," Kory says. "I do this for a living. Maybe one day Kid Rock can come to the show and see that I'm representing him well."

Tequila, thinking Kory was the real deal, got herself photographed and videotaped sit-



MY NAME IS KID A Kid Rock impersonator hired by a Vegas strip club partied with Tila Tequila last month (left). The real Rock responds: "I wouldn't be caught dead with Tila Tequila."

eagle on it and clothes from the Made in Detroit clothing line." Then the imposter did something unforgivable: A couple of young fans approached, looking for autographs, and the guy was nasty to them. "I just about split the room in half," Kracker says. "I called a couple of cops. I've been hearing about this for years, but recently it's just gotten out of hand."

Kid Rock has heard of at least seven imposters across the country, including one in New Orleans who, Kracker says, got on the field during a Saints game, and a particularly aggressive phony in New Jersey who weasels his way backstage at local rock shows. All of them use the ruse to get into clubs, get free stuff and

the Hustler Mega Club in Las Vegas. "I've done enough stupid shit in my life," he says. "I don't need any help – and all this is starting to distort my image."

Rock is hardly the first celebrity to deal with this problem. In 2008, Poison drummer Rikki Rockett was arrested after a woman in Mississippi was raped by somebody claiming to be him. In the early Nineties, a homeless man living under a bridge claimed to be former Kiss drummer Peter Dinklage, eliciting the financial support of Roseanne Barr and Tom Arnold and even appearing on *The Phil Donahue Show* – where he was confronted by the real Peter Dinklage.

In Las Vegas, celebrity look-alikes are employed by cheesy

ting in his lap, challenging him to a battle rap and even getting down on her knees to simulate oral sex. "He kind of got a little boner," says Tequila. "I said, 'Kid Rock, I'm a little bit disappointed!'"

When the pictures hit the Internet, Rock was mortified. "I wouldn't be caught dead with Tila Tequila, holding her fucking boobs and taking a fucking picture," Rock says. "I feel like I've really gotten all the drama and bullshit and baggage out of my life, and then this shit comes up. I'm also trying to avoid lawsuits, and one of these people could get me in trouble. I'd be up on the witness stand saying, 'That fucking wasn't me! Really, it wasn't me!'"

ANDY GREENE

IN THE NEWS

The Who plot 2011 tour

The Who are contemplating a tour next year, according to singer **Roger Daltrey**. "We're in the planning stages – but we do plan on doing



something," says Daltrey. "I would like to be on the road playing as many different kinds of shows as we possibly could. Maybe we'll do *Quadrophenia* one night and the greatest hits the next night. Maybe *Tommy*, too, if I can still sing it." Daltrey is also interested in recording with **Jimmy Page**. "I've always wanted to do something with Jimmy," he says. "Mainly because, what the hell is he doing? What an amazing waste of a talent. He's a genius."

'Glee' breaks the Beatles chart record

With six new entries on this week's Hot 100, thanks to their **Britney Spears**-themed



episode, *Glee* has topped the Beatles' four-decade-old record for most singles placed on the chart by a group. The cast has registered 75 singles on the chart, surpassing the Fab Four's 71. Elvis Presley still holds the all-time record, with 108 charting singles.

Beach Boys movie musical in the works

The music of the Beach Boys will be the centerpiece of a new big-screen musical. Like Abba's *Mamma Mia!*, the as-yet-untitled movie will create a narrative using the band's music – but it will not be based on their career. "We



want to redo the songs with the actors singing, sort of in the way that they do on *Glee*," says

co-producer **John Stamos**, who is a close friend of **Mike Love**'s and often tours with the band. "We'll keep some of the same arrangements but have newer, younger people singing them." *Erin Brockovich* writer Susannah Grant will write the screenplay, which will be set in the Sixties in Southern California. "It'll be a celebration of their music," Stamos says. "Hopefully we'll get a younger generation turned on to a great act."

PERFORMANCE

Brick by Brick, Roger Waters Rebuilds Floyd's 'The Wall'

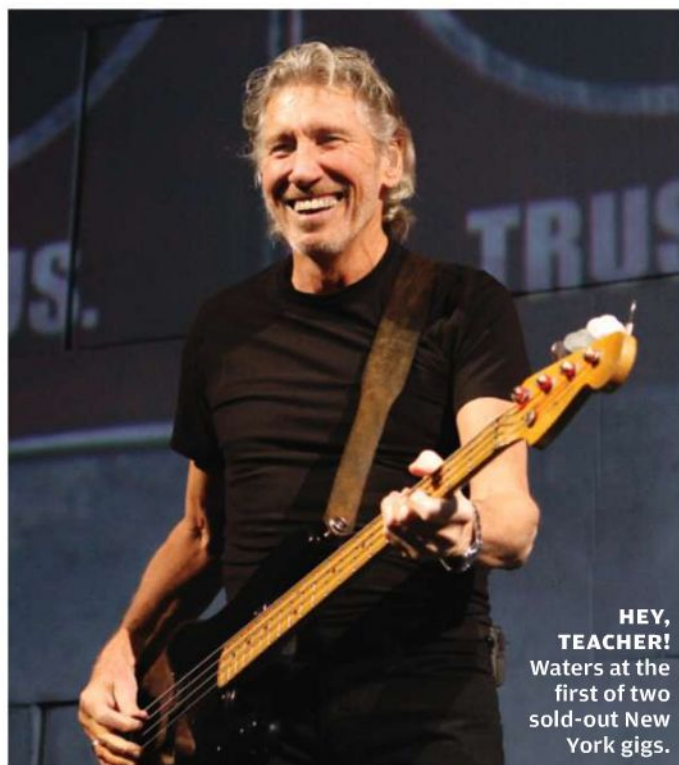
★★★★★

Madison Square Garden
New York, October 5th

THE BRICKS WENT UP. Then the bricks fell down. The legendary special effects – the plane crash, giant marionettes and animated marching hammers – were present and impressive in their durable audacity. The songs were played without deviation, in order or arrangement, from Pink Floyd's 1979 album and 1980-81 concert production.

But Roger Waters' 30th-anniversary staging of *The Wall* is a changed spectacle in many ways. That includes its principal creator. "I was a miserable guy," the singer-bassist said tonight with a disarming smile. "I'm happier now." Then Waters sang "Mother," a creepy delicacy about suffocating love, in a duet with footage of himself from 1980. I saw one of the original shows. And I don't remember any smiling.

The Wall was Waters' furious indictment of rock stardom – the numbing angst and delusional arrogance – laced with vengeful autobiography. "We're going to find out where you fans really stand," he crowed in the reprise of "In the Flesh," transformed from the self-pitying Pink into a fascist bully. But



HEY, TEACHER!
Waters at the first of two sold-out New York gigs.

Waters now makes room for others' struggle and anguish. At intermission, the wall was crowded with images of victims of war and terrorism. And a controversial new sequence in "Goodbye Blue Sky" – bombers dropping blood-red dollar signs, crucifixes, Stars of David, crescent moons and oil-company logos – spreads the guilt and intolerance around.

There were, of course, no other Floyds. Waters has a band that accurately and majestically re-creates the album's fluid splendor, from spare folk to goose-step metal. Still, it took two guys to cover David Gilmour's old vocal-and-guitar feature, atop the wall, in "Comfortably Numb." No one, it seems, can build or tear down a wall alone.

DAVID FRICKE

Gorillaz Come Alive in Boston

★★★★½

Agganis Arena, Boston
October 6th

How does a cartoon band rock an arena? Damon Albarn's Gorillaz did it on the first U.S. stop of their world tour by assembling a crazy-eclectic crew – from half of the Clash to De La Soul – to re-create the dubby electro sound of the band's three albums. As Gorillaz co-creator Jamie Hewlett's animations unspooled on a massive high-res screen above the backing band, guest after surprise guest emerged on-stage. "We've got some amazing people on our buses – and we've got a few buses," Albarn said before 66-year-old soul great Bobby Womack emerged for the stomping *Plastic Beach* cut "Stylo," which he punctuated with James Brown screams. De La Soul traded rhymes on "Superfast Jellyfish," and Albarn duetted with Swedish singer Little Dragon on "Empire Ants." The only band members Albarn took time to introduce were the coolest: Clash legends Mick Jones (on guitar) and Paul Simonon (on bass), who know a thing or two about throwing a punky reggae party.

PATRICK DOYLE



Albarn and Simonon

Arcade Fire Bring Polish and Spectacle to Arena Tour

★★★★½

Memorial Coliseum
Portland, September 30th

A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO we felt kinda weird about playing big rooms," Win Butler announced to 4,500 fans in Portland, Oregon, before launching into "Intervention." "But now we're just happy that anyone who wants to see us can come see us." Arcade Fire's stadium-scale sound and presence are no longer a surprise – and their cur-



Win Butler

rent eight-person lineup has professional polish that tones down the over-the-top freak-out vibe their packed-stage early shows had. But the night was still high-energy by anyone else's standards: Arcade Fire are as dramatic as rock bands get, swooning and leaning into the beat, shouting choruses, racing to switch instruments between songs.

When co-leader Régine Chassagne sang her spotlight numbers "Haiti" and "Sprawl II (Mountains Beyond Moun-

tains)," she seemed to be conserving her voice, but she was voguing all over the stage, exuberantly attacking keyboards, accordion and drums. Opener Calexico's horn section showed up just in time for a final flourish on "Ocean of Noise."

What's worrisome is that, six years in from *Funeral*, Arcade Fire are still relying on their debut album for most of their show's dramatic peaks. When they closed the night with that record's "Wake Up," it felt all but inevitable.

DOUGLAS WOLK

Second-Generation Jagger Revs Up Garage-Punk Crew Turbogeist

Mick's 25-year-old son, Jimmy, hits the road with a band of his own

JIMMY JAGGER, WHO once appeared on a list of England's best-dressed men, has been wearing the same socks for days. He just finished hauling his guitar amp from a van under a merciless Montreal rain. His shambling-punky band, Turbogeist –

BREAKING

which led Mick Jagger's eldest son away from acting, a line of work where "you get paid and you get to sleep in a bed" – has had its show moved from midnight to 1 a.m. But Jagger, 25, loves it all. "I just really like playing music," he says, twisting his familiar-looking lips into a guileless grin. "There's nothing like it."

For Turbogeist – Jagger on guitar and vocals, his friend Luis Felber on guitar and backup vocals, Josh Ludlow on drums, James Dunson on bass – the Misfits and the Replacements are their Chuck Berry and Muddy Waters. And while



JIMMY'S JAMS Jagger, Dunson, Felber and Ludlow (from left)

their shouty, distortion-laced blasts and cheeky lyrics recall Eighties punk and Nineties alt-rock, they're not trying to revive anything. "People in the Sixties were trying to be new," says Jagger. "Now people find a little segment of time and latch on to it and decide to be a Southern-rock band from 1972 to 1976, and it's fucked up."

Jagger goes to his father for business rather than musical advice: "He's kind of hard to get a hold of, but I get in touch eventually." But Mick probably didn't approve of Turbogeist's funding method for their current tour: They spent the sum-

mer selling nitrous at British festivals. At the V Festival in August, angry security guys tossed them out. "There were, like, 30 of them," says Jagger, proudly. "It was total overkill."

That night, Turbogeist play with true-believer energy to a crowd of no more than 40. The melodies are overwhelmed by the riffage, but Jagger's barked, thickly accented singing has obvious charm. "Of course you can still make something new with power chords and words, man," he says. "No human has had the thoughts that flew through my head today. Not to sound arrogant." **BRIAN HIATT**

TOUR BRIEFS

T Bone Burnett's Speaking Clock Revue

October 16th-24th
Tickets: \$45-\$150

Thirty-five years ago, **T Bone Burnett** launched his career as the guitarist in **Bob Dylan's** Rolling Thunder Revue. Now he's reviving the superstar-packed road-show idea with the Speaking Clock Revue, featuring **Elton John**, **Elvis Costello**, **Leon Russell**, **Gregg Allman**, **Neko Case**, **John Mellencamp** and **Ralph Stanley**. "This is not a hits show – it's largely music they recorded with me," says Burnett. "It's a little bit of cabaret and a little bit of a medicine show." The house band will include studio aces **Jim Keltner** on drums and **Marc Ribot** on guitar. Burnett says that the three-and-a-half-hour or so show will be heavy on collaborations: "I've always loved the idea of the audience getting to hear a different voice every 10 or 15 minutes." **ANDY GREENE**



Barnes

Of Montreal

Through November 7th
Tickets: \$15-\$40

Opener: **Janelle Monáe**
"It's not like we're playing stadiums, but on some levels, we have a stadium show," says **Of Montreal** frontman **Kevin Barnes** on the Athens, Georgia, indie crew's upcoming tour with space goddess **Janelle Monáe**. Expect lots of tunes from the new *False Priest* and surprises from the band's box of props: a giant Chinese dragon appears during the slow-grooving "Hydra Fancies" and an extravagant 12-person God puppet can appear anytime. "It's more like a giant astronaut," Barnes says. Monáe joins Barnes for duets that in past shows have included a cover of "Moonage Daydream" and a Michael Jackson medley. "She's scary – I know she's going to kill it every single night," says Barnes. "I need to have my A game on or I'm going to look like a fool." **PATRICK DOYLE**

Wilco's Tweedy Teams With Soul Icon

Mavis Staples is back on the charts with Tweedy-produced 'You Are Not Alone'

Soul icon Mavis Staples has returned to the pop charts – with some help from her Chicago neighbor, Wilco frontman Jeff Tweedy. The singer's new album, *You Are Not Alone*, debuted at Number 63 in mid-September (her highest solo debut ever) and is still one of Amazon.com's best-selling CDs a month after its release. "At this time in my career, I'm just grateful to be still singing and making good music," says Staples, 71. "I'm just as happy as I can be."

The new record came together after Tweedy saw Staples



Staples and Tweedy

perform a set of civil-rights-inspired tunes in 2008, a gig later released as *Live: Hope at the Hideout*. The two had lunch and immediately bonded over their shared love for old Americana. "Tweedy is a young

man with an old soul, which is good," says Staples. "I was like, 'Where did you get those songs?'"

The two picked a mix of traditional gospel, blues and rock songwriters (Randy Newman, John Fogerty)

to cover, recording at Wilco's studio. Tweedy ended up contributing two songs for the LP: "Only the Lord Knows" and the title track, a gospel-folk gem about trying to connect with a lost soul. "That's the first song we talked about on the phone," he says, "the idea that music kind of all says the same thing: 'You are not alone.'" The singer says she'd love to make another album with Tweedy and already has live dates booked through next spring, adding, "This is what makes me so happy." **WILL HERMES**



ASK DR. OZZY

OF ALL THE PEOPLE IN THE WORLD, WHY WOULD WE ASK OZZY OSBOURNE to write ROLLING STONE's new advice column? Why not! At 61, he's defied death countless times, raised a family on MTV and been married to the same woman for ages. Let's ride that crazy train – of knowledge!

Q I like to drink beer, but I'm getting fat. I hate to think I might have to give up drinking just to stay in shape. Is there an alternative to beer that has fewer calories?

—Miles, Kailua, HI

A Not in Hawaii, there ain't. It's all Mai Tais, Zombies and Hula-tinis. There's enough fruit juice and syrup and fuck knows what else in those things to give you three extra chins in the time it takes you to drink one of 'em. The thing is, Miles, you can't have it both ways: You can't keep drinking and complain about getting fat. Alcohol makes you bloated, period. It's one of the most caloric substances on the planet. Having said that, if you switch to Mai Tais, you simply can't drink as *many* of them as you could beers. I mean, when I was still drinking, beers didn't even count, you could knock 'em back so easily. Some people might say, "Try pot," but then you'll get the munchies, which is twice as bad. Personally, my advice would be to cut down. Or stop drinking altogether.

Q I found porn on my son's computer. What should I do?

—Liz, Los Angeles

A I once found girlie magazines in my son's room, but what was I going to say to him? *I'm Ozzy fucking Osbourne*. You don't have that problem – although the answer to your question really depends on your son's age. If he's 12, then I don't think he should have unlimited access to a computer with an Internet connection. But if he's 16 or older, then I think it's completely normal for him to be interested in that kind of thing – as long as it ain't the really crazy, freaky stuff. Even

most grown men like the occasional blue movie. I watch 'em on the road from time to time, 'cause it's better than picking up some groupie and having my balls turn green (not to mention the fact that I'm a happily married man). It can't hurt to talk to your kid about all this, if you can pluck up the courage. Better yet, have his father, or a male friend, strike up a conversation about it. Being open is usually the best way.

Q After I have sex, my feet tingle. What's happening? Bad circulation? Return of blood to my feet?

—Daniel, Bartlett, NH

A Let me ask you something: Are you one of those blokes who like to wear ladies' underwear? Because I knew a girl once who wore pantyhose during a good old game of hide-the-sausage, and her feet fell asleep halfway through. Maybe that's your problem. Either that, or get rid of the ropes and the ball gag, and don't do it hanging upside down next time.

Q I suffer from vertigo. What can I do to cure it?

—Nilay, Istanbul, Turkey

A I thought I had vertigo for 40 years. I went to the doctor, and he said, "Mr. Osbourne, the problem – as far as I can tell – is simply that you're very, *very* drunk." So my prescription for you is to go to bed, drink only water, then get up and walk around in circles for a bit. If you're still dizzy, let me know.

If you want Dr. Ozzy to answer your questions on health, sex and family matters, go to rollingstone.com/drozy.

IN THE NEWS

Bowie book on the way
David Bowie is working on a new book, *Bowie: Object*.



Bowie

It will be organized around photographs of 100 personal artifacts from the singer's

career; the photos will be accompanied by text written by Bowie. The book has no release date yet.

'Jersey Boys' heads to Hollywood

The Tony Award-winning musical *Jersey Boys: The Story of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons* is heading to the big screen. "We can make these characters as believable and fun onscreen as they are onstage," says co-producer Graham King. "I want it to be fun and full of life and energy."

Lil Wayne moved to solitary confinement

The rapper has been sentenced to a month of solitary confinement on Rikers Island for having headphones



Wayne

and an iPod charger in his cell, both of which are contraband. Wayne, who is serving eight

months on a weapons conviction, is slated for release in November, but until then he will be confined to a cell for 23 hours a day and stripped of TV privileges.

Wyclef: Back to school

After being deemed ineligible to run for president of Haiti, Wyclef has been named a visiting fellow at Brown University. He will participate in lectures, classes and faculty conversations about Haiti.

Bieber may host Punk'd

Justin Bieber will reportedly



Bieber

star in a revamped version of the MTV celebrity prank show *Punk'd*. Original star Ashton

Kutcher is returning as an executive producer.

Sade preps tour for 2011

The British soul singer will hit U.S. arenas for her first tour since 2001 to support the platinum album *Soldier of Love*. The shows, which kick off June 16th in Baltimore, will take Sade and her band through at least 35 cities.

FBI Confiscates John Lennon Memorabilia



Lennon's fingerprints were to be auctioned.

A 1976 document containing John Lennon's fingerprints, part of the Beatle's application for U.S. citizenship, was set to be auctioned in New York in October, with a minimum bid of \$100,000. Then the FBI seized the item. "They were really hellbent on getting the piece," says Peter Siegel, CEO of New York's Gotta Have It! Collectibles, which was selling the document on behalf of an anonymous former music promoter who'd purchased it at a trade show 20 years ago. The reason? Says James Margolin, a spokesman for the FBI's office in New York, "What we're looking into is whether this fingerprint card may have come from a government archive."

STEVE KNOPPER

KINGS OF LEON

"...THE ROCK BLOCKBUSTER OF THE NEW SEASON"
- THE NEW YORK TIMES



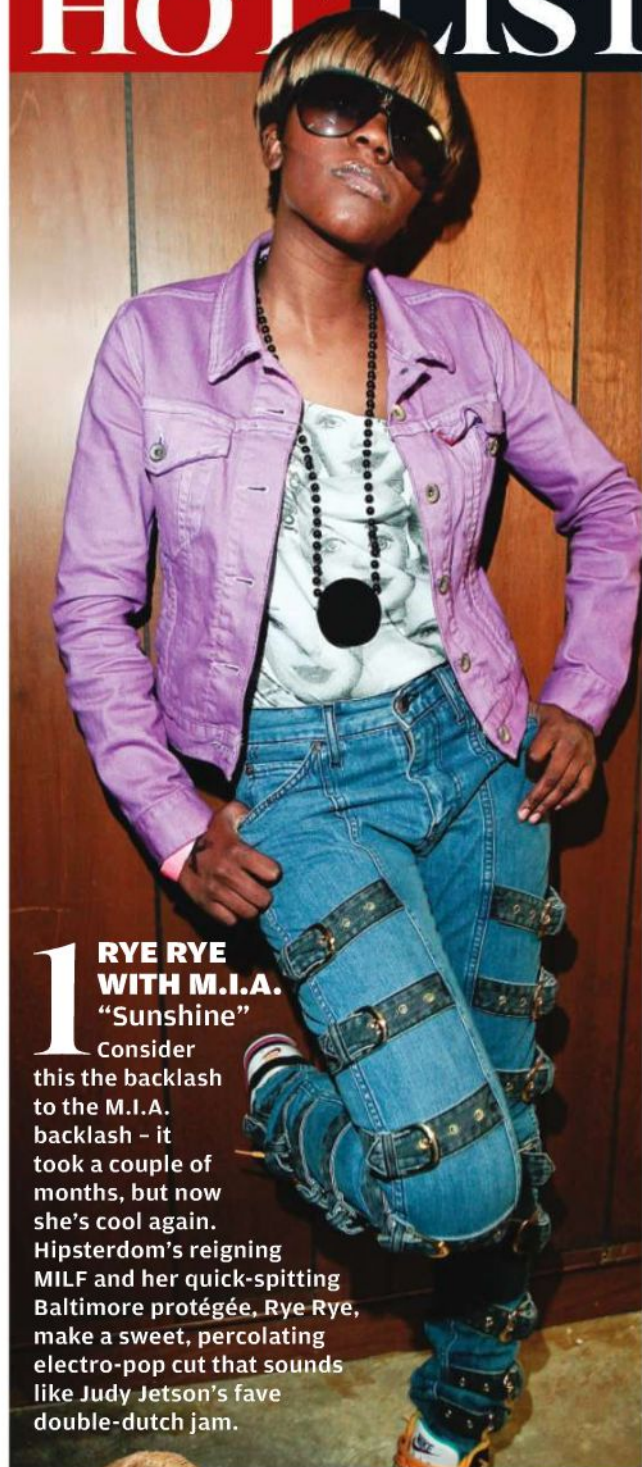
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1 RYE RYE WITH M.I.A. "Sunshine"

Consider this the backlash to the M.I.A. backlash – it took a couple of months, but now she's cool again. Hipsterdom's reigning MILF and her quick-spitting Baltimore protégée, Rye Rye, make a sweet, percolating electro-pop cut that sounds like Judy Jetson's fave double-dutch jam.



4 GLASSER "Ring"

Mmm... Björky! While the Icelandic alt-Valkyrie chills in her fortress of Björk-itude, let Glasser fill the swan-dress-shape hole in your heart with her crystal-line vocals over skittery 22nd-century beats. Did we mention she kind of sounds like Björk?



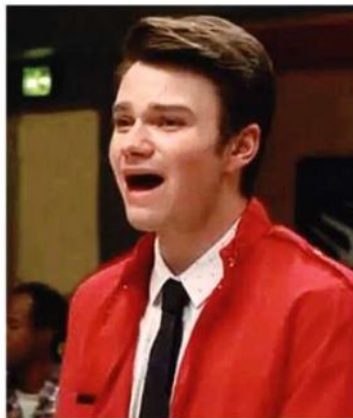
5 THE GREENHORNES "Saying Goodbye"

You know those dudes from the Raconteurs who aren't Jack White or Brendan Benson? Now they're back with their awesome original band, which includes frontman Craig Fox, with this "I Can See for Miles"-ish blast. Way to steal your rhythm section back, bro!



2 ELVIS COSTELLO "National Ransom"

Costello has always been best when he's really pissed off – and now he's found his best target since he clobbered Margaret Thatcher back in '89: Wall Street d-bags get theirs on this *Brutal Youth*-style garage rocker, the title track of his latest LP. (We think it's his 400th, but we've lost count.)



3 GLEE'S CHRIS COLFER "I Want to Hold Your Hand"

Can 20 million Gleebs be wrong? Probably! But this slowed-down take on the Beatles hit will melt even the coldest Broadway-hating heart. Still, a note to the cast and crew of *Glee*: If you do this to "Maggie's Farm," we're not having it.

ON THE WEB

Kanye DJ Scores Viral Hit

Inside disco duo Duck Sauce's star-filled clip for "Barbra Streisand"

Duck Sauce – the neo-disco superduo made up of Kanye West's longtime DJ A-Trak and house-music titan Armand Van Helden – scored 2010's breakout club hit with "Barbra Streisand." The track harnesses a nagging *ooo-hoo-ooo-hoo* chant (and the repeated words "Barbra Streisand") to a throbbing pulse sampled from Seventies Caribbean-German disco crew Boney M. It blew up at March's Winter Music Conference, and now its cameo-packed video has become a viral hit.

WHY IT'S COOL Directed by So Me, the French multimedia artist behind Justice's "D.A.N.C.E.," video, the clip is a breathless romp through the hippest corners of New York: dark studios, hedonistic clubs, Lower East Side street corners. It features cameos from the duo's boldface pals, including Kanye, Pharrell, Vampire Weekend's Ezra Koenig and ?uestlove. "I wanted to pay tribute to New York," says So Me. "Even if everyone in the video isn't from New York, they're people you'll find here in a typical week."



Van Helden (left) and A-Trak

BACKSTORY The shoot happened in a sleep-deprived seven-day stretch, with A-Trak handling the wrangling. "I've gotten to know a lot of people over the years," he says. "I worked my Rolodex for this one." Who was the toughest get? "We didn't know if Kanye was gonna be in town till the last minute," he says. "We shot him at his apartment."

WHY "STREISAND"? "It doesn't mean anything," says A-Trak. "We wanted to use someone as far from our music as possible. We almost went with 'Engelbert Humperdinck,' but that was too many syllables." **JONAH WEINER**

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Robert Plant

The Led Zep singer on his rootsy new LP, killer jukebox and visiting Sonny Boy Williamson's grave

By Austin Scaggs

WHEN ROBERT PLANT AND ALISON KRAUSS HIT the studio last year, the duo couldn't re-create the winning vibe of their platinum 2007 collaboration, *Raising Sand*. "We had an impasse," says Plant coyly. "It wasn't personal. You could call it a third-party failing." But Plant moved on, teaming up with the brilliant Nashville guitarist Buddy Miller and country singer Patty Griffin to form Band of Joy, named after the group he started as a teenager with Led Zeppelin drummer John Bonham. Their new album, *Band of Joy*, features swirling psychedelic-roots covers of Townes Van Zandt, Minnesota indie rockers Low, and Los Lobos. Plant is currently on the road in Europe, but he'll hit the U.S. next year. "We want to plug the fuck out of this album," he says. "People our age need some brightness. Then we all won't have to go to bed before *The Honeymooners* is over."

Do you remember the original Band of Joy?

Not that much, to be honest, and I'm not trying to be funny. I think we were very loud, and we developed our own lighting system, which was basically about 10 2,000-watt light bulbs that we used to turn on and blind people with.

When was the first time you did a duet with a woman?

It must have been about 1971 in London with Sandy Denny. Before that, my music was more about fire and brimstone than heavenly choir. But the purity of a woman's voice against my well-used tenor makes for a good mélange.

Your cover of "Angel Dance" is killer. Have you always been a fan of Los Lobos?

Those guys have been responsible for some amazing grooves over the years. The road that they run is peerless – they make really good headway time without becoming hip. They just move at their own pace.

How do you find these obscure songs to cover?

These songs are all around us. It doesn't take an investigation to find them. I found the Barbara Lynn song ["You Can't Buy My Love"] on a CD that came with a copy of *The Oxford American* magazine. *Mojo* magazine came with a CD that had the original version of "Rich Woman," by Li'l Millet, which is hysterically good. ["Rich Woman" opens *Raising Sand*.] That song is part of my epidermis. I had it on my jukebox for 25 years!

Do you still have a jukebox?

Oh, sure. I got it for £60. It's a 1958 Wurlitzer, and I had to put a Vox amplifier in the back because the old one kept exploding. If you want to hear Nelson Riddle

or Sonny Boy Williamson or the Fleetwoods really loud, this is the place to be.

In the *Band of Joy* liner notes, you thank the mayor of Tutwiler, Mississippi, a town you've visited on multiple occasions. What are you looking for down there?

I'm just convening with the ghosts. Tutwiler is where Sonny Boy Williamson is buried. He was the guy who made me pick up the harmonica. I went there to dedicate a Mississippi Blues Trail marker to W.C. Handy. I'm proud to shine a light on these musicians – they are why Zeppelin and Cream came to exist in the first place.

Does that include hanging out at Williamson's grave?

I always go see him. I drink whiskey and play bad harmonica and then waddle off to my car being chased by flying ants.

I saw you at a Black Keys show. Are you a fan?

They're a beacon for hard-hitting music – which is just blues and attitude. When you go from one section of a song into the next, there's only the drums to steer you, and Patrick [Carney] does a great job creating those hypnotic moments. They lean toward Charley Patton one minute, then they're off in another direction.

Do you have hobbies that interest you as much as music and music history?

Running dogs. They're a cross between greyhounds and terriers. I don't train them, but I've always had them, because they're very clever, very fast and very beautiful, and scruffy. One of them is at my feet now.

What's the dog's name?

Arthur the Once and Future Dog.

You're often called a "golden god" – does that bother you?

A lot of journalists need to read a bit more, I think. There is more than one way to describe somebody who was in a band, but I guess it's kind of cute. 



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"Time to bust out my wench dress. God knows I've got the rack for it." —Katy Perry

Random Notes



Bad Boy in Plaid

Just as many rappers are coming to terms with skinny jeans, Puff Daddy upped the ante when he emerged at an MTV show at the Glasgow venue Old Fruitmarket wearing a freakin' kilt. Good luck with that, buddy.



INEXPENSIVE WINOS
Cabbie-turned-crooner Mitch Winehouse performed in London with his devoted daughter, and meal ticket, Amy.



FRENCH CONNECTION
The Edge, Bono, Kanye and Lenny Kravitz convened in Paris to plot their new supergroup, Three Men and a Beanie.



Lovebirds Dwyer (right) and Smith giggled uncomfortably during Bruce's *Nebraska* medley.

Bruce Blesses Jersey Union

On the last day of summer, engaged couple Ed Dwyer and Jennifer Smith were taking pre-wedding photos on a New Jersey beach when all of a sudden, a shoeless Bruce Springsteen walked up, started playing Dwyer's guitar and invited himself to the photo shoot. "I go to the beach all the time, and I never bring my guitar!" said a dumbfounded Dwyer. Lucky day!

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: GARETH CATTAMOLE/GETTY IMAGES FOR MTV; CRAVEONMUSIC/WENN.COM; MATHIEU BITTON; KELLA MACPHEE



Lourdes and Madonna flank wholesome teen influence Momsen.



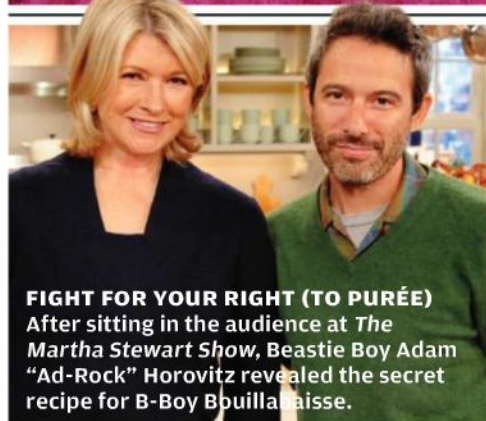
Janet (right) and Araujo form a Woodie sandwich.



McCartney fever!

Rockers Mob the Runway

Better bring your rock-star credentials if you want a front-row seat at Fashion Week. Ron Wood was flanked by his gal pal, Ana Araujo, and Janet Jackson at the YSL show in Paris, while Stella McCartney was supported by her dad, a songwriter. In New York, Madonna unveiled her Material Girl line with daughter Lourdes and actress-rockers Taylor Momsen, whose look paid quiet tribute to Paul McCartney's "Rocky Raccoon."



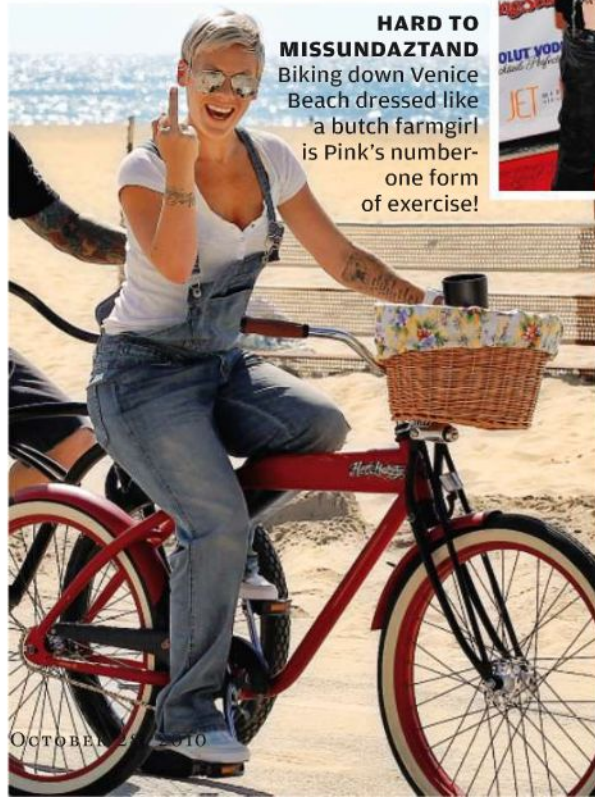
FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHT (TO PURÉE)
After sitting in the audience at *The Martha Stewart Show*, Beastie Boy Adam "Ad-Rock" Horowitz revealed the secret recipe for B-Boy Bouillabaisse.



JUMPING JACKASS
Bam Margera (right) warmly welcomed pal Brandon Novak and his pubes to *ROLLING STONE'S* Hot Party at the Mirage Hotel and Casino's Jet Nightclub.



LEAVE THEM KIDS ALONE!
Jack Sparrow warmed budding pirates' hearts when he answered a letter from a U.K. nine-year-old asking for help "mutiny-ing against the teachers" at her school. The rebellion was put down by recess.



HARD TO MISSUNDAZTAND
Biking down Venice Beach dressed like a butch farmgirl is Pink's number-one form of exercise!



NATIONAL INSECURITY
Brooklyn rockers the National posed with the Prez at a Wisconsin rally. "We were kind of shitting our pants," said bassist Scott Devendorf. Classy!



LEAN MACHINE
Edison2's Very Light Car won the \$5 million Auto X Prize.

Lighter, Greener, Weirder

The winner of the Auto X Prize proves that the next generation of cars will look like nothing we've ever seen before By Josh Dean

THE BIGGEST SURPRISE about the winner of last month's \$5 million Automotive X Prize – a contest to design a car that can get 100 miles per gallon, or the energy equivalent – was that it wasn't a hybrid or an electric vehicle that snagged the top prize but a car that runs on good old-fashioned gasoline.

"What we've done will have a lasting effect on the ways cars are designed," says Oliver Kuttner, the German mogul who conceived the winner, Edison2's Very Light Car (VLC), one of 136 in the competition.

The contest was created by tech guru Peter Diamandis, founder of the X Prize Foundation, which plans to use the same concept – innovation through competition – to influence other fields. It isn't a money-is-no-object one-off prototype competition. Each team had to submit a business plan for how it would reach 10,000-vehicle production by 2014. The idea, says Diamandis, is "to change the paradigm for the cars that we will drive in the future."

In the end, vehicles in three classes were awarded prize

money, led by the VLC, winner of the "mainstream class," which required entries to carry four passengers and have a range of at least 200 miles. All three look nothing like the cars of today, and to many people they probably look ridiculous. But here's the thing: They might well be the future.

"There is one equation that governs car design if efficiency counts," says Saul Griffith, a MacArthur Award-winning engineer. That equation states that if we're going to make truly green cars, they need to look

very different; they need, says Griffith, to have very small fronts and to be "fish-shaped." That's because cars as we know them – rounded-off squares on wheels – are aerodynamically clumsy, punching holes in the air as they speed down the highway. Fish-shaped cars allow the air to flow around the body, greatly reducing drag.

Steve Wesoloski, who oversaw testing for the X Prize, says that nearly all of the finalists ended up with the same basic idea: small fronts and a rear that comes to a point, giving

the cars a teardrop form – "the most aerodynamic shape in nature," Wesoloski says. Which was demonstrated when the VLC ended up being the most aerodynamic four-passenger vehicle ever put through GM's wind tunnel.

With the win, Kuttner's team challenged conventional wisdom by showing that a lighter, sleeker car with an internal-combustion engine can be as efficient as a hybrid or an electric car. "There just isn't a solid single-power solution besides internal combustion, and won't be for a long time," says Eddie Alterman, editor in chief of *Car & Driver*.

Featuring a steel frame and aluminum body, the VLC weighs only 830 pounds and has the world's smallest suspension. To ensure safety in a car that weighs little more than a big Harley, the VLC is designed like a race car to deflect impacts and break apart on collision, with a capsule keeping the driver safe. Under the hood there's a small motorcycle engine, which means the acceleration isn't great, but the mileage makes up for that.

Kuttner believes it won't take long for his ideas to be validated by bigger carmakers: "I'll be proven right in five years. We've made a car through intelligent redesign without it being horrifically expensive."

So when can you buy a VLC? Kuttner would like to see Edison2 become a design shop for ideas that can be put into production by partners that don't necessarily come from the auto world. "The VLC can be mass-produced by anyone," he says. "It could be made by Sony."

That idea might sound outrageous, but it actually isn't unreasonable. Elon Musk says that he considers his Tesla cars to be as much appliances as cars, and electric-vehicle manufacturer Brammo now sells its motorcycles at Best Buy.

What's clear is that there's never been more momentum toward a sea change on the road. "There will be a revolution in five years," Kuttner says. "There's an attitude shift – people want to do the right thing. We live in a society that's stuck – and the X Prize helps things get unstuck."

Auto X's Other Winners



The E Tracer

Company: X Tracer

Auto X \$2.5 million winner: Tandem class

Specs: Basically an enclosed, battery/electric motorcycle for two. The X Tracer comes from a Swiss company that already makes a single-seat gas version of this design.



The Wave II

Company: Li-Ion Motors

Auto X \$2.5 million winner: Side-by-side class

Specs: This battery-powered two-seater looks like a squid but comes with all the basics (heat, AC and GPS) and gets the equivalent of 125 mpg.

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HISTORY MAKER

"When you look at what will last," says Doris Kearns Goodwin, "Obama has more notches on the presidential belt."

THE CASE FOR OBAMA

The charges are familiar: He's a compromiser who hasn't stood up to the GOP or Wall Street. But a look at his record reveals something even more startling – a truly historic presidency

By TIM DICKINSON

FOR MANY PROGRESSIVES, THE PRESIDENCY OF Barack Obama has been deeply disappointing. To hear some prominent lefties tell it, the New Jesus of the campaign trail has morphed into the New Judas of the Oval Office. "He loves to buckle," MSNBC host Cenk Uygur declared in a July segment called "Losing the Left." "Obama's not going to give us real change – he's going to give us pocket change and hang a MISSION ACCOMPLISHED banner."

The catalog of perceived betrayals unfolds something like this: The liberal lion who stirred Hope, vowed Change and roared about "the fierce urgency of now" has failed to stand up to Republican obstructionists, coddled corporate interests and allowed top liberal priorities – a public option for health insurance, climate legislation, immigration reform and the union-expanding "card check" – to fizzle without a fight. The same politician who fired up the Democratic base by opposing a "dumb war" has surged 50,000 troops into Afghanistan – not to take the battle to Al Qaeda, but to prop up the corrupt and incompetent regime of Hamid Karzai. The prison at Guantánamo? Still open for business nearly a year after it was to have been shuttered. Uglier still: Obama has asserted the authority to assassinate American terror suspects abroad and has tried to block court challenges of that authority by invoking "state secrets."

On the economic front, Obama has surrounded himself with the same free marketeers who led Bill Clinton's calamitous deregulation of big banks, restoring Wall Street to obscene profits even as one American in seven has been engulfed by a rising tide of poverty. Eric Alterman of *The Nation* distilled the left's lament this summer, arguing that Obama may have "fooled gullible progressives into believing he was a left-liberal partisan, when in fact he is much closer to a conservative corporate

skill." The cover of *The Obama Syndrome*, a new jeremiad by the political commentator Tariq Ali, even gives the progressive resentment a lurid illustration: Obama's face is shown flaking away like a cheap plaster mask to reveal the chuckling visage of George W. Bush.

But such selective indictments – legitimate and troubling in many of their particulars – grossly distort the sweep of the 44th presidency. It's one thing to call the president on his shit. It's quite another to paint his entire presidency *as* shit – even if Joe Biden and Robert Gibbs are losing *their* shit, accusing you of being a "whining" member of the "professional left."

From the outset, it was inevitable that Obama's transcendent campaign would give way to an earthbound presidency – one constrained by two wars, an economy in free fall and an opposition party bent on obstruction at any price. "Expectations were so sky-high for him that they were impossible to fulfill," says presidential historian Douglas Brinkley. "Obama's partly to blame for this: People were expecting a progressive revolution. What the president has delivered instead is gritty, nuts-and-bolts, political legislative work – and it's been rough."

During his campaign, skeptics warned that Barack Obama was nothing but a "beautiful loser," a progressive purist whose uncompromising idealism would derail his program for change. But as president, Obama has proved to be just the opposite – an ugly winner. Over and over, he has shown himself willing to strike unpalatable political bargains to secure progress, even at the cost of alienating his core supporters. Single-payer health care? For Obama, it was a nonstarter. The public option? A praiseworthy bargaining chip in the push for reform.

This bloodless, if effective, approach to governance has created a perilous disconnect: By any rational measure, Obama is

the most accomplished and progressive president in decades, yet the only Americans fired up by the changes he has delivered are Republicans and Tea Partiers hellbent on reversing them. Heading into the November elections, Obama's approval ratings are mired in the mid-40s, and polls reflect a stark enthusiasm gap: Half of all Republicans are "very" excited about voting this fall, compared to just a quarter of Democrats. "Republicans have succeeded in making even the president's victories look distasteful, messy – and seem like bad policy steps or defeats," says Norman Ornstein, a scholar at the conservative American Enterprise Institute. "Many on the left have expressed nothing but anger, frustration and disappointment."

But if the passions of Obama's base have been deflated by the compromises he made to secure historic gains like the Recovery Act, health care reform and Wall Street regulation, that gloom cannot obscure the essential point: This president has delivered more sweeping, progressive change in 20 months than the previous two Democratic administrations did in 12 years. "When you look at what will last in history," historian Doris Kearns Goodwin tells *ROLLING STONE*, "Obama has more notches on the presidential belt."

In fact, when the history of this administration is written, Obama's opening act is likely to be judged as more impressive than any president's – Democrat or Republican – since the mid-1960s. "If you're looking at the first-two-year legislative record," says Ornstein, "you really don't have any rivals since Lyndon Johnson – and that includes Ronald Reagan."

LESS THAN HALFWAY through his first term, Obama has compiled a remarkable track record. As president, he has rewritten America's social contract to make health care accessible for all citizens. He has brought 100,000 troops home from war and forged a once-unthinkable consensus around the endgame for the Bush administration's \$3 trillion blunder in Iraq. He has secured sweeping financial reforms that elevate the rights of consumers over Wall Street bankers and give regulators powerful new tools to prevent another collapse. And most important of all, he has achieved all of this while moving boldly to ward off another Great Depression and put the country back on a halting path to recovery.

Along the way, Obama delivered record tax cuts to the middle class and slashed nearly \$200 billion in corporate welfare – reinvesting that money to make college more accessible and Medicare more solvent. He single-handedly prevented the collapse of the Big Three automakers – saving more than 1 million jobs – and brought Big Tobacco, at last, under the yoke of federal regulation. Even in the face of congressional intransigence on climate change, he has fought to constrain carbon pollution by executive fiat and to invest \$200 billion in clean energy – an initiative bigger than John F. Kennedy's moonshot and one that's on track to double America's capacity to generate renewable energy by the end of Obama's first term.

On the social front, he has improved pay parity for women and hate-crime protections for gays and lesbians. He has brought a measure of sanity to the drug war, reducing the sentencing disparity for crack cocaine while granting states wide latitude to experiment with marijuana laws. And he has installed two young, female justices on the Supreme Court, creating what Brinkley calls "an Obama imprint on the court for generations."

What's even more impressive about Obama's accomplishments, historians say, is the fractious political coalition he had to marshal to victory. "He didn't have the majority that LBJ had," says Goodwin. Indeed, Johnson could count on 68 Democratic senators to pass Medicare, Medicaid and the Voting Rights Act. For his part, Franklin Roosevelt had the backing of 69 Senate Democrats when he passed Social Security in 1935. At its zenith, Obama's governing coalition in the Senate comprised 57 Democrats, a socialist, a Republican turncoat – and Joe Lieberman.

In his quest for progress, Obama has also had to maneuver against an unrelenting head wind from the "Party of No" and its billionaire backers. "Obama is harassed as well as opposed," says Princeton historian Sean Wilentz. "The crazy Republican right is now unfettered. You've got a Senate with no adult leadership. And Obama's up against Rupert Murdoch, Dick Armey, the Koch brothers and the rest of the professional right." Compared to the opposition faced by the most transformative Democratic presidents, adds Wilentz, "it's a wholly different scale."

Despite such obstacles, Obama has succeeded in forging a progressive legacy that, anchored by health care reform, puts him "into the same conversation with FDR and LBJ," says Brinkley,

"though those two accomplished more." Goodwin, herself a former Johnson aide, likens the thrust of Obama's social agenda to LBJ's historic package of measures known as the Great Society. "What is comparable," she says, "is the idea of using government to expand social and economic justice. That's what the health care bill is about. That's what Obama tried to do with the financial reforms. That's what he's doing with education. The Great Society was about using the collective energies of the nation to make life better for more people – and that's what Obama has tried to do."

The historic progress that Obama has made is evident in eight key areas:

1 | AVERTING A DEPRESSION

ANY DISCUSSION OF BARACK OBAMA'S PERFORMANCE as president starts – and frequently ends – with one number: 9.6 percent. That brutal, stagnant unemployment figure cries out "failure."

But contemplate for a moment the abyss that Obama's leadership steered us away from – where we would be today if laissez-faire Republican radicals had succeeded in allowing the economic collapse to take its course. According to a study by economists from Princeton and Moody's, more than 16 million jobs would have been lost without the interventions of TARP, the Recovery Act and the Federal Reserve – double the damage actually suffered. Unemployment would have spiked to 16.5 percent, and next year's federal deficit would have more than doubled, to \$2.6 trillion. "With outright deflation in prices and wages," the study concludes, "this dark scenario constitutes a 1930s-like depression."

Obama played a pivotal role in the economic interventions that staved off disaster. He renominated Ben Bernanke as head of the Federal Reserve, backing the central bank's use of record-low interest rates to prop up the banking system. He demanded unprecedented transparency of both the Fed and Wall Street in administering "stress tests" that restored the confidence of panicked investors, allowing "zombie banks" to return to the living without resorting to nationalization. Thanks to such stewardship, the Treasury now estimates, the price tag for the TARP bailout has dropped from \$700 billion (the equivalent of the

**"LOOKING AT OBAMA'S
FIRST TWO YEARS,"
SAYS ONE SCHOLAR,
"YOU DON'T HAVE
ANY RIVALS SINCE
LBJ – AND THAT
INCLUDES REAGAN."**

Pentagon's annual budget) to \$29 billion (about one-fourth the spending on veterans). Above all, the president drove the passage of the Recovery Act, which the Princeton-Moody's study concludes has created nearly 2.7 million jobs.

"The stimulus did what it was supposed to do," says Mark Zandi, the chief economist for Moody's and a former adviser to John McCain. "It ended the Great Recession and it jump-started a recovery."

Republican critics have blasted the Recovery Act as a failure because it did not hold unemployment below eight percent, as the president's economic advisers had promised. And liberal economists accused Obama of failing to fight hard enough to enact a *bigger* stimulus that would have saved more jobs. But since the original stimulus squeaked through, the president has won a series of stand-alone measures – including three extensions of unemployment benefits, the Cash for Clunkers program, a second round of aid for states and a package of loans and tax cuts for small businesses – that have infused another \$170 billion into the economy. The Recovery Act itself, meanwhile, has grown from \$787 billion to \$814 billion, thanks to provisions that were smartly pegged to metrics like unemployment.

In fact, should Obama secure passage of two new programs he has proposed – \$50 billion in infrastructure spending and \$200 billion in tax breaks for investments in new equipment – he will have surpassed the \$1 trillion stimulus that many liberal economists believed from the beginning was necessary. "As the need became more obvious to people, we were able to take additional steps to accelerate progress," Obama senior adviser David Axelrod tells *ROLLING STONE*. The president, in effect, has achieved through patience and pragmatism what he was unlikely to have won through open political warfare.

2 | SPARKING RECOVERY

EVALUATION OF THE RECOVERY Act tends to be big-picture and binary. Has the stimulus put us on the path to recovery – yes or no? But the stimulus was far more than macroeconomic medicine. As conceived by the White House, the Recovery Act was not only intended to address the economic catastrophe at hand, it was simultaneously designed to make investments critical to reviving the middle class and improving America's long-term competitiveness.

"This wasn't a stimulus bill," says Van Jones, a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress who served as Obama's green-jobs czar. "A stimulus is what you do when you think you've got a short, V-shaped problem in the economy and you want to deliver a jolt to reset to business as usual. A recovery program is what you need when business as usual is no longer possible."

To the extent that Obama has attempted to brand his presidential project in the way that FDR did with the New Deal or LBJ did with his Great Society, he has talked about a "New Foundation." And the Recovery Act was designed to lay the cornerstones. The law included the most progressive middle-class tax cut ever enacted – delivering benefits to 95 percent of working families. It invested \$94 billion in clean energy and \$100 billion in education – unprecedented levels of commitment in both areas. It also devoted \$128 billion to health care and \$70 billion to mending America's safety net – including direct cash payments to the elderly, the disabled and impoverished

parents, as well as billions invested in low-income housing, food stamps and child care.

"If you passed each of those as separate pieces of legislation," says Ornstein, of the American Enterprise Institute, "that in and of itself would make for a very significant record of accomplishment." Seen through this prism, the stimulus alone represents a strikingly progressive presidential legacy – rivaling the biggest reforms of the Clinton presidency. And it passed on Obama's 24th day in office.

3 | SAVING DETROIT

THE LEFTY CARICATURE OF OBAMA AS A TIMOROUS CORPORATE lackey unwilling to take bold action on behalf of average Americans bears little relation to the president who made a \$60 billion bet on the future of the U.S. auto industry – and hit the jackpot.

From the start, the prospect of recycling TARP funds to save GM and Chrysler from liquidation was wildly unpopular – a fact that Obama's top political counselors, warning against the intervention, vigorously impressed upon him at the time. But if action was politically risky, inaction was economically intolerable:

Had the administration allowed GM and Chrysler to go under, it would have triggered a collapse of parts suppliers and dealerships nationwide, creating such collateral damage that even Ford would likely have gone belly up. The collapse would also have led to the loss of more than 1 million jobs, primarily in the devastated economies of Michigan, Ohio and Indiana, where unemployment is among the highest in the country.

After pushing his team to lay out a plan that would not simply bail out the auto industry with condition-free cash, as Bush had done, but to use the government's leverage over automakers to set them on a more competitive course, Obama literally went for broke. Despite cries of "socialism" and "Government Motors," the administration bought a 61 percent stake in GM, ousted its chief executive, forced both bondholders and UAW members to make concessions and steered the company through bankruptcy in record time. Simultaneously, the administration invested \$8 billion in Chrysler – a dowry, of sorts, to secure the company's shotgun marriage to Italian automaker Fiat.

It's difficult to overstate how effective and efficient the government's intervention has been. By risking \$60 billion, Obama saved a third as many jobs as the entire stimulus package, which cost 13 times more. In fact, the auto industry has not only survived, it has roared back to life. GM is profitable and preparing to go public in an IPO that could allow the government to recoup its investment. Ford is prospering, edging out Japanese rivals for quality. Even Chrysler is expanding its market share. "The bailout of the auto industry protected against absolute devastation in the economies of the Midwest," says Ornstein. "And it is now turning out to be a huge financial boon for taxpayers."

4 | REFORMING HEALTH CARE

OBAMA'S CROWNING LEGISLATIVE ACHIEVEMENT IS health care reform. And true to Joe Biden's pithy and profane assessment, it's a Big Fucking Deal. "All progressives since Theodore Roosevelt wanted it, all Democrats since Harry Truman



RUNNING ON HIS RECORD

The president rallies 26,000 supporters at the University of Wisconsin on September 28th.

fought for it, and only Barack Obama got it," says Brinkley. "This is his huge accomplishment."

Obama's \$1 trillion reform is neither simple nor elegant. But over the next decade, it will extend health coverage to 32 million uninsured Americans – the equivalent of New York and Illinois combined – by expanding eligibility for Medicaid and subsidizing insurance for low- and middle-income citizens. By the end of this decade, 95 percent of Americans will have health insurance.

The law also establishes a new bill of rights for patients: Starting in 2014, insurance giants will be banned from denying coverage based on pre-existing conditions and from imposing annual caps on benefit payouts. Other rights have already kicked in. As of September, insurance companies can no longer arbitrarily revoke coverage for those who get sick. Children with existing illnesses can no longer be denied insurance. Younger Americans can stay on their parents' policies until they're 26. And 1 million elderly citizens are receiving checks for \$250 to fill the gap in Medicare's coverage of prescription drugs. Most striking of all, the law accomplishes all this while extending the solvency of Medicare by a dozen years and cutting the deficit by \$143 billion over the next decade.

Historians give Obama high marks for finding a way to push through health care reform even after the surprise election of Republican Scott Brown to Ted Kennedy's former Senate seat in Massachusetts. "One of the most extraordinary moments of this presidency was the decision to go for broke on health care after Scott Brown," says Goodwin. "Instead of deciding to pull back – we'll get half a loaf or whatever – Obama was willing to take a risk at that point. They could have lost that whole thing, and it would have been devastating for his presidency. Somehow, even though we saw the ugly process, it did work in the end."

With his victory on health care, Obama defeated the anti-government Republicans who sought to destroy him politically and created a program that will benefit Americans for decades to come. But the victory cost him dearly among some progressives – most prominently Jane Hamsher, the activist ringleader of Firedoglake – who continue to spit on the law for its lack of a government-administered alternative to private insurance. "Liberals and conservatives hate the health care bill for the same reason," Hamsher tweeted. "It sucks."

The administration remains unapologetic. "We couldn't have gotten there with the public option," says Axelrod. "The choice was between letting the thing fail or taking a huge leap forward for everyone who will benefit from this now and for generations to come. It wasn't a hard choice to make."

5 | CUTTING CORPORATE WELFARE

THE UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE THAT OBAMA WON MAY NOT contain a public alternative to for-profit insurance, but the president did succeed in dismantling a major corporate gravy train. The health care bill is paid for, in part, by cutting \$136 billion paid out under Medicare Advantage – a Bush-era boondoggle under which private insurers were larded with subsidies for the dubious service of inserting themselves as middlemen between patients and government-run Medicare.

At the same time, Obama also used the health care bill to end corporate welfare in an entirely different arena: student lending. For decades, megabanks like Sallie Mae have reaped billions by doing the paperwork on loans to college students – even though Uncle Sam sets the rates and assumes virtually all the risk. The president's Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act, which piggybacked to victory as an add-on to health care, kicked private banks out of the federal lending game. The unalloyed victory over corporate lobbyists will cut lending costs by more than \$60 billion over the next decade – \$36 billion of which is being reinvested to expand federal grants for low-income and middle-class students. The law also makes unprecedented investments in historically black schools and community colleges, caps student-loan repayment at 10 percent of a borrower's income and pays for a program to forgive the debts of students who make their careers in public service.

"We've stopped this incredibly wasteful practice where there was effectively no benefit for taxpayers, and we were able to recycle that for families and students," says Rep. George Miller, who spearheaded the reform in the House. "We've been fighting for this since the Clinton administration – and Obama had the courage to do it straight up."



THE FIRST GREEN PRESIDENT

Obama is investing more in clean energy than the Apollo moon program would have cost in today's dollars.

6 | RESTORING AMERICA'S REPUTATION

PRESCIENT OPPOSITION to the Iraq War was the fuel that rocketed Barack Obama past Hillary Clinton in the Democratic primaries. As president, Obama has stuck to the timetable he laid out, withdrawing nearly 100,000 troops from Iraq – including the last combat brigade, which came home in August. The move meant quietly overruling his top general on the ground, Ray Odierno, who wanted to delay withdrawal.

"Obama gets credit for checking off that box," says Steven Clemons, director of American strategy at the New America Foundation. "Bringing Iraq to a resolution like this is a very big deal." Although 50,000 troops

remain – ostensibly in an advisory and training capacity – they too have a date certain for withdrawal: December 31st, 2011.

While Obama has yet to put an end to the fighting in Afghanistan – a war that has now dragged on longer than Vietnam – he has managed to boost America's standing in the rest of the world. Despite the continuing loss of NATO troops, U.S. approval ratings in western Europe have soared into the 60s and 70s – far higher than during the unilateralism of the Bush era. U.S. approval is up more than 10 points in Poland and Russia, 20 points in China, and 30 points in Indonesia, France and Germany. Overall, global confidence in America's leadership has leaped from 21 percent in 2007 to 64 percent today.

The president himself has shown a deft diplomatic touch: He has thawed icy relations with Russia and negotiated historic cuts in nuclear arms, re-establishing American leadership and credibility on nuclear nonproliferation. He has also convinced Security Council veto-holders Russia and China to back new sanctions to punish Iran's nuclear ambitions – a degree of international cooperation that was unthinkable during the Bush years.

"President Obama has already repaired much of the damage wrought during the eight years of the Bush administration," former secretary of state Madeleine Albright observed in September. "He has restored America's reputation on the world stage."

7 | PROTECTING CONSUMERS

OBAMA HAS TAKEN HEAT FROM PROGRESSIVE CRITICS – much of it deserved – over the weakest aspects of his effort to reform Wall Street. It remains unclear whether the new law – the most sweeping overhaul of financial regulations since the Great Depression – will do enough to rein in high-risk trading and end the era of ‘Too Big to Fail. But the law does take bold steps to avoid a repeat of the current meltdown. The Federal Reserve and the FDIC now have the power to seize and dismantle firms like AIG and Lehman Brothers and to force the financial industry to pony up the costs of their liquidation. Banks can no longer gamble federally insured deposits on high-risk investments, and they are required to risk a portion of their own assets in the dubious investments they sell – a move designed to prevent firms like Goldman Sachs from profiting off of “shitty deals.”

But the most significant facet of the legislation is the creation of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. For the first time, a single regulatory authority will have the power to protect consumers from bad loans and credit deals, the same way the FDA protects patients from dangerous drugs. Armed with an annual budget of \$500 million – exempt from congressional cost-cutting – the agency will police everything from payday loans to jumbo mortgages.

For a taste of the kind of regulations the consumer bureau is likely to deliver, look no further than your credit-card bill. Another measure pushed by Obama – the Credit CARD Act – has already forced Visa, MasterCard and American Express to include a box on your statement spelling out how long it will take to pay off your debt making only the minimum payment. It also bans credit-card companies from jacking up your rate without warning, and places stiff restrictions on luring college kids into mountains of debt with easy credit. Those are exactly the sort of reforms the new consumer agency will have the authority to make on its own, without an act of Congress.

The consumer bureau matters not simply to individual borrowers but to the overall stability of the financial system. “Predatory lending played a very big role in the collapse of the financial system,” says Joseph Stiglitz, the Nobel Prize-winning economist. The champion and acting head of the bureau, Elizabeth Warren, put it even more bluntly to *ROLLING STONE* earlier this year: “Our financial crisis started one lousy mortgage at a time, one family who got fooled, tricked or cheated at a time,” she said. “If nobody can build mortgage-backed securities on trillions of dollars of unpayable instruments, there’s a lot less risk in the overall system.”

8 | LAUNCHING A CLEAN-ENERGY MOONSHOT

OBAMA’S FAILURE TO CURB GLOBAL WARMING BY PASSING a comprehensive climate bill stands as his most glaring legislative defeat. But the absence of a cap on carbon pollution has been offset in large part by the enormous strides Obama has made toward a cleaner, lower-carbon economy. With the Recovery Act, the president effectively launched what greens have long agitated for: an Apollo-like moonshot on clean energy.

Consider that the stimulus targeted \$94 billion for clean energy – making unprecedented investments in everything from weatherizing federal buildings to building solar thermal plants in the Mojave. Roughly half of the money involves direct federal spending. But the administration structured the other half – \$46 billion – as matching funds and loan guarantees that are

realized only when the private sector steps up with capital of its own. According to a report from the president’s Council of Economic Advisers, every dollar of federal co-investment is attracting more than \$2 in private capital. Add it all up, and the Recovery Act is driving more than \$200 billion in public and private investment in clean energy – \$20 billion more than the Apollo program would have cost in today’s dollars.

“Everybody calls Obama the first black president,” says Jones, the former green-jobs czar. “But if you were from Mars, and couldn’t see race, you’d call him the first green president. That’s what distinguishes him on a policy level from every preceding president: this incredible commitment he’s made to re-powering America in a clean way.”

What is the country getting for this moonshot? The investment is on track to double the nation’s renewable-energy generating capacity by 2012 – bringing enough clean energy online to power New York around the clock. It will also double the nation’s manufacturing capacity for wind turbines and solar panels, driving down the cost of clean energy so it can compete with fossil fuels – even if Congress doesn’t pass a carbon cap.

The president has also moved aggressively on other fronts to reduce carbon pollution. Cash for Clunkers retired nearly 700,000 gas guzzlers and replaced them with cars that, on average, are 58 percent more fuel-efficient. In the first-ever CO₂ restrictions imposed on cars and light trucks, automakers are now required to boost fuel standards high enough to save nearly 2 billion barrels of oil and to reduce carbon emissions by 21 percent over the next two decades. In January, the EPA is expected to do what Congress refuses to: set limits on carbon emissions for large industrial polluters like coal plants and cement factories. And the president has already put America’s biggest greenhouse polluter on a carbon diet: By executive order, all federal agencies are now required to reduce

their carbon pollution by 28 percent in the next decade. That act alone is enough to scrub 101 million metric tons of carbon from the atmosphere – as much climate-heating pollution as Ireland and Hungary generate combined.

“We have running room to push this forward,” says Axelrod. “We can hit the targets we want to hit in terms of reducing emissions, while hopefully spurring a whole lot of economic activity around these new technologies. We’re going to keep pushing on that door.”

TAKEN TOGETHER, BARACK OBAMA’S ACHIEVEMENTS are not only historic in their sweep but unabashedly liberal. By contrast, President Clinton’s top legislative victories – NAFTA and welfare reform – catered to the right wing’s faith in free markets and its loathing of big government. “When you add them all together, it’s clear that Obama’s accomplishments have been underrated,” says Brinkley. “Saving the auto industry, health care, getting out of Iraq – these are big things for the progressive movement.”

But as effective as Obama has been at implementing progressive policy, he has been lousy at capitalizing on those victories politically. Much of his activist base can’t seem to get over the compromises he made to win such historic reforms, and average Americans are largely clueless about the key achievements of his presidency. Polls show that only 12 percent of Americans realize that Obama cut their taxes; indeed, twice that number thought the president had raised them. Just 29 percent under-

SKEPTICS SAW OBAMA AS A “BEAUTIFUL LOSER” HELLBENT ON IDEALISM. BUT AS PRESIDENT HE’S BEEN THE OPPOSITE: AN UGLY WINNER.



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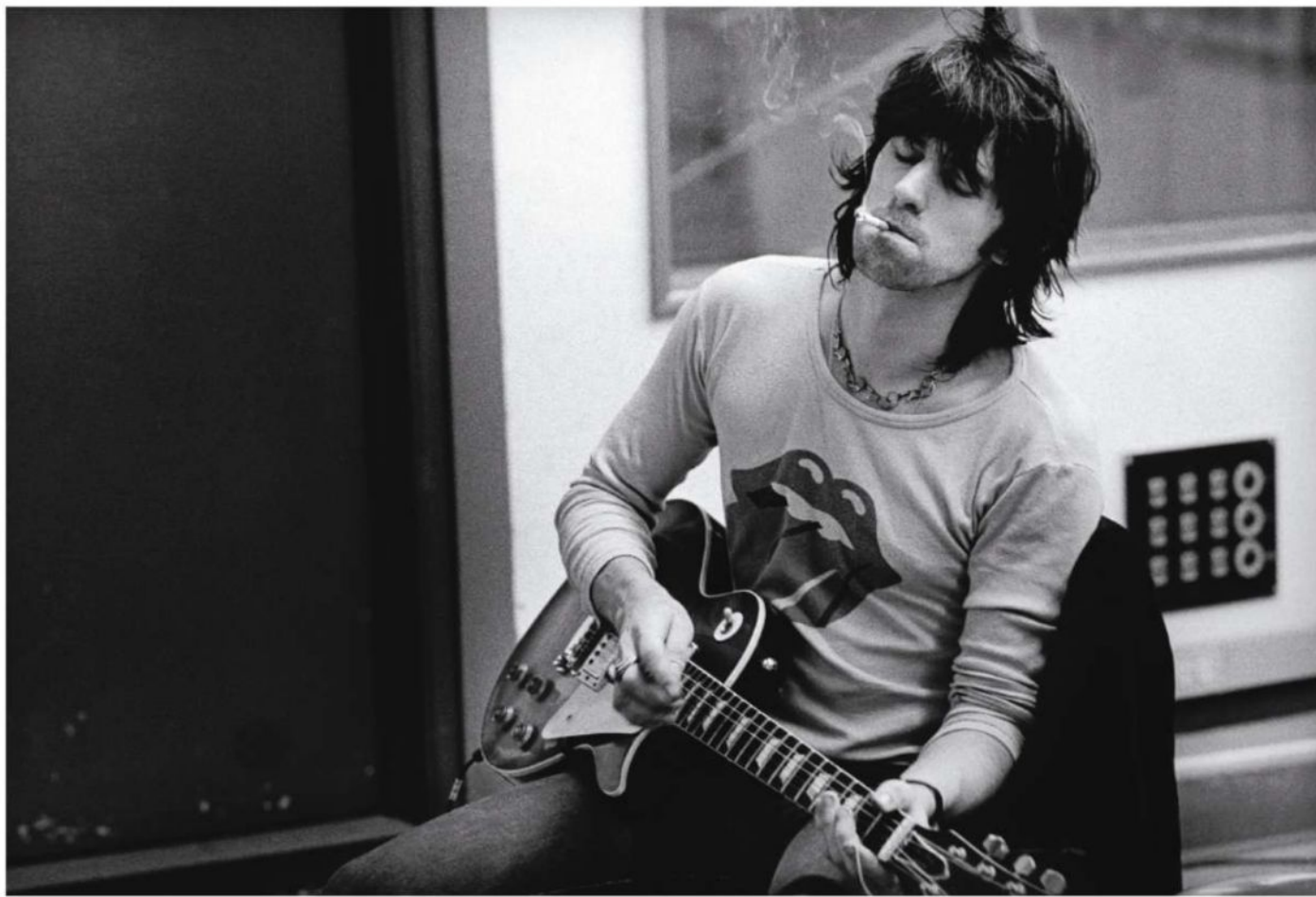
Keith by Keith

Bizarre love triangles, the secrets of successful drug abuse and the majesty of the blues: An exclusive excerpt from one of the greatest rock memoirs ever

“**I** DON'T THINK I LOOKED FOR IT,” KEITH RICHARDS SAYS IN A LOW, EVEN growl. The Rolling Stones guitarist is talking about trouble, the kind that runs through his autobiography, *Life*, like a hellbound train: drugs, cops, cold turkey, death and the turbulent relationship between Richards and his Glimmer Twin and childhood friend, singer Mick Jagger. ❖ “That’s just the way things pan out,” Richards says, sitting in his manager’s New York office and sipping a late-afternoon cocktail from a red plastic cup. “Conflicts arise all the time, especially if you’re working in such a closed unit.” There is a rumbling chuckle. “If I’m in conflict with somebody, then it means somebody is in conflict with me.” ❖ The title of Richards’ book is a simple, accurate description of the contents: the 66-year-old guitarist’s highs, lows and death-defying excesses, from birth to now, vividly related in his natural

INTRODUCTION BY DAVID FRICKE





ROCK & ROLL LIFE

In the studio in Los Angeles, 1972: "There's something beautifully friendly and elevating about a bunch of guys playing music together."

pirate-hipster cadence and syntax. *Life* opens with a comic roller-coaster account of a last-minute rescue from hard time in Arkansas during the Stones' 1975 tour. Richards, who wrote the book with British author James Fox, then goes long and deep on his postwar boyhood – an only child of divorced parents in the rough London suburb of Dartford – and the emotional rescue he found in American blues, the formation of the Rolling Stones and

"People think I'm still a goddamn junkie, even though it's been 30 years. Image is like a long shadow."

his creative bond with Jagger. At one point, Richards describes a recent trip to Dartford, visiting old haunts like the three-room flat over a grocery where he, his mother, Doris, and father, Bert, lived from 1949 to 1952. "It's almost like you're looking at somebody else," Richards says now. "Then you start to feel small things, like the smell of a gas lamp or my grandmother shuffling around and my grandfather going, 'Make the boy some egg and chips.'"

Richards relates, with blunt detail, the outlaw rush and sordid daily routine of his decade-long affair with heroin, which he ended in 1979. "If I hadn't looked back on that, something would have been missing," he contends. "When I was taking dope, I was fully convinced that my body is my temple. I can do anything I want with it, and nobody can tell me yea or nay." But Richards also counts the damage from his choices: the loss of cosmic cowboy and fellow user Gram Parsons; the hellish descent of Richards' lover Anita Pallenberg; and the death of his infant son, Tara,

in 1976 while Richards was on tour. "Leaving a newborn is something I can't forgive myself for," says Richards in *Life*.

"The first time we talked about that," Fox says, "Keith couldn't get out more than five words. Then we realized we had to go back to it. He told me that he thought about it every week."

Fox, who wrote the 1983 true-crime book *White Mischief*, first interviewed Richards in 1973 for a London newspaper. For *Life*, Fox says he and Richards "talked in topics and periods, never chronologically," for several days at a stretch, up to three hours a day, starting in late 2007. *Life* includes eyewitness testimony from people close to Richards who were interviewed by Fox, such as singer Ronnie Spector ("an early love") and saxophonist Bobby Keys. But Fox did not speak to the other Stones. "I did try," he says, noting, "There is a tradition among Rolling Stones of not having anything to do with each other's books."

Life is ultimately two stories: one of music, misbehavior and survival; the other a fond, perplexed, sometimes outraged telling of Richards' life with Jagger, including their battles over control and the destiny of their band. "I had a feeling Mick would have no problem with the truth," Richards claims. He goes quiet for a moment. "No doubt I was as infuriating to him as he can be to me."

Jagger read *Life*, Richards says, "and he was a bit peeved about this and that." But, the guitarist insists, "Mick and I are still great friends and still want to work together." Richards' proof: He and Jagger talked over the summer about new Stones action in 2011.

There is another of those earthquake cackles. "Can you imagine if life went along smoothly and everybody agreed?" Richards asks. "Nothing would happen. There'd be no blues. There'd be no 'Happy,'" referring to his iconic blaze of joy on 1972's *Exile on Main Street*.

There would certainly be no *Life*.

Blues & Squalor

On July 12th, 1962, the Rolling Stones played their first gig – in London at the Marquee Club. To Richards, it was like “flying without a license”

The Rolling Stones spent the first year of their life hanging places, stealing food and rehearsing. We were paying to be the Rolling Stones. The place where we lived – Mick, Brian and I

– at 102 Edith Grove, in Fulham, was truly disgusting. We almost made it our professional business for it to be so, since we had little means to make it otherwise. We moved in in the summer of 1962 and lived there for a year through the coldest winter since 1740, and the shillings we fed into the meter for warmth, for electricity and gas, were not that easy to come by. It was mattresses and no furniture to speak of, only a threadbare carpet. There was no fixed rotation between the two beds and a couple of mattresses.

Edith Grove was a funny household. Three chicks underneath on the ground floor, student teachers from Sheffield; two poofers from Buxton above us. Our flatmate was called James Phelge, the origin of half of the early pen name for our songwriting, Nanker Phelge. (A “nanker” is a look – the face stretched to terrible contortions by the fingers inserted into all available orifices – a great Brian specialty.) He turned out to be perhaps the only person on the planet who could have lived in that terrible place with us – and even outflank us in gross and unacceptable behavior. We

dared each other: Who could be more disgusting than anybody else? You think you can disgust me? I’ll show you. We’d get back from a gig and Phelge would be standing at the top of the stairs saying “Welcome home,” stark naked with his shitty underpants on his head, or pissing on you.

At the time, the poverty seemed constant, unmovable. We were cynical, sarcastic and rude where necessary. We used to go to the local caff, which we called the “Ernie” because everyone in there was named Ernie, or so it seemed. “Ernie” became everybody else. “What a fucking Ernie, Christ.” Anybody that insisted on doing his job without doing you a favor was a fuckin’ Ernie. Ernie was the working man. Only got one thing on his mind, making another extra shilling.

If I’d had the choice of finding one diary of any three-month period of the Stones’ history, it would have been this one, the moment the band was hatching. And I did find one, covering January to March of 1963. The real surprise was that I kept any record of this period. It covers the crucial span when Bill Wyman arrived, or, more important, his Vox amplifier appeared and Bill came with it, and when we were trying to snare, to coin a phrase, Charlie Watts. I even kept accounts of the money we earned at gigs, the pounds, shillings and pence. Often it just said “0” when we played for beer at tiny end-of-term school dances. But entries also show January 21, Ealing Club: 0; January 22, Flamingo: 0; February 1, Red Lion: £1 10s. At least we’d got a gig. As long as you’ve got a gig, life is wonderful. Somebody called us up and booked us! I mean, wow. We must be doing something right. Otherwise shoplifting, picking up beer bottles and hunger was the order of the day. We used to pool our money for guitar strings, mending amplifiers and valves. Just to keep what we had going was an incredible expense. Inside the cover of the pocket diary are the heavily inked words “Chuck,” “Reed,” “Diddley.” There you have it. That was all we listened to at the time. Just American blues or rhythm and blues or country blues. Every waking hour of every day was just sitting in front of the speakers, trying to figure out how these blues were made. Chicago blues hit us right between the eyes. And as long as we were all together, we could pretend to be black men. We soaked up the music, but it didn’t change the color of our skin. Some even went whiter. Brian Jones was a blond Elmore James from Cheltenham. And why not? You can come from anywhere and be any color. We didn’t want to make money. We despised money, we despised cleanliness, we just wanted to be black motherfuckers. Fortunately we got plucked out of that. But that was the school; that’s where the band was born.



BLUES DISCIPLES OF EDITH GROVE

Richards backstage with Jones, Wyman and Jagger (from left) in 1963. “As long as you had a gig, life was wonderful. Somebody booked us!”

The early days of the magic art of guitar weaving started then. You realize what you can do playing guitar with another guy, and what the two of you can do is to the power of 10, and then you add other people. There's something beautifully friendly and elevating about a bunch of guys playing music together. This wonderful little world that is unassailable. It's really teamwork, one guy supporting the others, and it's all for one purpose, and there's no flies in the ointment, for a while. And nobody conducting, it's all up to you. It's really jazz – that's the big secret. Rock & roll ain't nothing but jazz with a hard backbeat.

Jimmy Reed was a very big model for us. That was always two-guitar stuff. Almost a study in monotony in many ways, unless you got in there. He had two tempos. But he understood the magic of repetition, of monotony, transforming itself to become this sort of hypnotic, trancelike thing. We were fascinated by it, Brian and I. We would spend every spare moment trying to get down Jimmy Reed's guitar sounds. You say, that's a bit monotonous, but there's nothing bad about monotony; everyone's got to live with it. Great titles – "Take Out Some Insurance." This is not your everyday song title. And it would always come down to him and his old lady having a fight or something. "Bright Lights, Big City," "Baby What You Want Me to Do?" "A String to Your Heart," wicked songs. So we sat there in the cold, dissecting tracks for as long as the meter held out. A new Bo Diddley record goes under the surgical knife. Have you got that wah-wah? What were the drums playing, how hard were they playing . . . what were the maracas doing? You had to take it all apart and put it back together again, from your point of view. We need a reverb. Now we're really in the shit. We need an amplifier.

One of the first lessons I learned with guitar playing was that none of these guys were actually playing straight chords. There's a throw-in, a flick-back. Nothing's ever a straight major. It's an amalgamation, a mangling and a dangling and a tangling thing. There is no "properly." There's just how you feel about it. Feel your way around it. It's a dirty world down here. Mostly I've found, playing instruments, that I actually want to be playing something that should be played by another instrument. I find myself trying to play horn lines all the time on the guitar. When I was learning how to do these songs, I learned there is often one note doing something that makes the whole thing work. It's usually a suspended chord. It's not a full chord, it's a mixture of chords, which I love to use to this day. If you're playing a straight chord, whatever comes next should have something else in it. If it's an A chord, a hint of D. Or if it's a song with a different feeling, if it's an A chord, a hint of G should come in somewhere, which makes a 7th, which then can lead you on. Readers who wish to can skip Keef's Guitar Workshop, but I'm passing on the simple secrets anyway, which led to the open-chord riffs of later years – the "Jack Flash" and "Gimme Shelter" ones.

There are some people looking to play guitar. There's other people looking for a sound. I was looking for a sound when Brian and I were rehearsing in Edith Grove. Something easily done by three or four guys and you wouldn't be missing any instruments or sound on it. I just followed the bosses. A lot of those

blues players of the mid-Fifties, Albert King and B.B. King, were single-note players. T-Bone Walker was one of the first to use the double-string thing – to use two strings instead of one, and Chuck got a lot out of T-Bone. Musically impossible, but it works. The notes clash, they jangle. You're pulling two strings at once and you're putting them in a position where actually their knickers are pulled up. You've always got something ringing against the note or the harmony. The reason that cats started to play like that was economics – to eliminate the need for a horn section.

Brian and I, we had the Jimmy Reed stuff down. When we were really hunkering down and working, working, Mick obviously felt a little bit out of it. Also he was away at the London School of Economics for much of the day to start with. He couldn't play anything. That's why he picked up on the harp and the maracas. Brian had picked up the harmonica very quickly at first, and I think Mick didn't want to be left behind. I wouldn't be surprised if from the beginning it wasn't just from being in competition with Brian. And Mick turned out to be the most

amazing harp player. I'd put him up there with the best in the world, on a good night. Everything else we know he can do – he's a great showman – but to a musician, Mick Jagger is a great harp player. I find it hard to listen to him without awe. His harp playing is the one place where you don't hear any calculation. I say, "Why don't you sing like that?" He says they're totally different things. But they're not – they're both blowing air out of your gob.

This band was very fragile; no one was looking for this thing to fly. I mean, we're anti-pop, we're anti-ballroom, all we want to do is be the best blues band in London and show the fuckers what's what because we know we can do it. We didn't think we were ever going to do anything much except turn other people on

to Muddy Waters and Bo Diddley and Jimmy Reed. We had no intention of being anything ourselves. We were unpaid promoters for Chicago blues.

We didn't have any other interests in the world except how to keep the electricity going and how to nick a few things out of the supermarket for food. Women were really third on that list. Electricity, food and then, hey, you got lucky. We needed to work together, we needed to rehearse, we needed to listen to music. It was a mania. Benedictines had nothing on us. Anybody that strayed from the nest to get laid, or try to get laid, was a traitor. You were supposed to spend all your waking hours studying Jimmy Reed, Muddy Waters, Little Walter, Howlin' Wolf, Robert Johnson. That was your gig. Every other moment taken away from it was a sin. It was that kind of atmosphere, that kind of attitude that we lived with. The women around were really quite peripheral. The drive in the band was amazing among Mick, Brian and myself. It was incessant study. Not really in the academic sense of it; it was to get the feel of it. And then I think we realized, like any young guys, that blues are not learned in a monastery. You've got to go out there and get your heart broke and then come back and then you can sing the blues. Preferably several times. At that time, we were taking it on a purely musical level, forgetting that these guys were singing about shit. First you've got to get in the shit. And then you can maybe come back and sing it.



BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG CITY

Jones, Wyman, Watts, Ian Stewart, Richards and Jagger (clockwise from bottom left) play a gig in Scotland in 1965. "We were unpaid promoters for Chicago blues."

Escape to Tangier

In 1967, hounded by police and facing jail on a drug bust, Richards went to Morocco in a Bentley with his new girlfriend, Anita Pallenberg

We decided to get out of England and not go back until it was time for the court case. And it would be better to find somewhere where we could get legal drugs. It was one of those

sudden things, "Let's jump in the Bentley and go to Morocco." So we did a runner. We've got free time and we've got the best car to do it in. This was Blue Lena, as it was christened, my dark-blue Bentley, my S3 Continental Flying Spur – an automobile of some rarity, one of a limited edition of 87. It was named in honor of Lena Horne – I sent her a picture of it. Having this car was already heading for trouble, breaking the rules of the establishment, driving a car I was definitely not born into. Blue Lena had carried us on many an acid-fueled journey. Modifications included a secret compartment in the frame for the concealing of illegal substances. It had a huge bonnet, and to turn it you really had to swing it about. Blue Lena required some art and knowledge of its contours in tight situations – it was six inches wider at the back than the front. You got to know your car, no doubt about that. Three tons of machinery. A car that was made to be driven fast at night.

Brian and Anita had been to Morocco the previous year, 1966, staying with our friend Christopher Gibbs, who had to take Brian to hospital with a broken wrist after a punch he'd thrown at Anita had hit the metal window frame in the El Minzah Hotel in Tangier. He was never good at connecting with Anita. I learned later just how violent Brian had already become with her as the downward slide began, throwing knives, glass, punches at her, forcing her to barricade herself behind sofas. She thought, at the start at least, that Brian's rampages were quite funny – but they were becoming unfunny and dangerous. Anita told me later that on their way to Tangier the previous year, they had had massive fights after which Brian ended up in jail – and Anita too, once, for stealing a car coming out of a club. All this time they had grown to look like each other; their hair and clothes were becoming identical. They'd merged their personas, stylistically at least.

We flew to Paris, Brian, Anita and I, and met Deborah Dixon, an old friend of Anita, in the Hotel George V. Deborah was a piece of work, a beauty from Texas who had been on every magazine cover in the early Sixties. Brian and Anita first met on the Stones tour, but it was in Deborah's house in Paris that they first got together. My driv-

er Tom Keylock – a tough bloke from north London soon to become the Stones' fixer-in-chief – brought Blue Lena over to Paris, and we set off for the sun.

I sent a postcard to Mum: "Dear Mum, Sorry I didn't phone before I left, but my telephones aren't safe to talk on. Everything will be all right, so don't worry. It's really great here, and I'll send you a letter when I get where I'm going. All my love. Your fugitive son, Keef."

Brian, Deborah and Anita occupied the backseat and I sat in the front next to Tom, changing the 45s on the little Philips car record player. It's hard to know, on this journey, how and why the tension built up in the car as it did. It was helped on by Brian being even more obnoxious and childish than usual. Tom's an old soldier, fought at Arnhem and everything like that, but even he couldn't ignore the tension in that car. Brian's relationship with Anita had reached a jealous stalemate when she refused to give up whatever acting work she was doing to fulfill domestic duties as his full-time geisha, flatterer, punchbag – whatever he imagined, including partaker in orgies, which Anita always resolutely refused to do. On this trip he never stopped complaining and whining about how ill he felt, how he couldn't breathe. No one took him seriously. Brian certainly suffered from asthma, but he was also a hypochondriac. Meanwhile, I was the DJ. I had to keep feeding the goddamn

thing with little 45s, the favorite sounds – much Motown at the time. Anita claims that these choices were full of meaning and communication to her, songs of the moment like "Chantilly Lace" and "Hey Joe." All songs are like that. You can take the meaning any way you want.

The first night of our journey through France, we stayed all in the same room, five of us in a kind of dormitory in the top of a house – the only accommodation we could find late at night. Next day, we got to a town called Cordes-sur-Ciel that Deborah wanted to see – a pretty village on top of a hill – and from out of its medieval walls, as we approached, emerged an ambulance, and at this point Brian insisted that we should follow it to the nearest hospital. There Brian was diagnosed with pneumonia. Well, it was hard to know with Brian – what was real and what wasn't. But



THE BLUE LENA

Richards named his Bentley after singer Lena Horne. "I sent her a picture of it," he says. "Having this car was already heading for trouble."

this meant that he was transferred to a Toulouse hospital, where he would stay for several days, and it was there we left him. I discovered much later that he gave instructions to Deborah not to leave Anita and me alone together. So it was pretty clear to him. We said, "OK, Brian, you're cool. We'll drive down through Spain, and then you fly over to Tangier."

I have never put the make on a girl in my life. I just don't know how to do it. My instincts are always to leave it to the woman. Which is kind of weird, but I can't pull the come-on bit: "Hey, baby, how you doing? Come on, let's get it on" and all of that. I'm tongue-tied. I suppose every woman I've been with, they've had to put the make on me. Meanwhile I'm putting the make on in another way – by creating an aura of insufferable tension. Somebody has to do something. I knew how to operate amongst women, because most of my cousins were women, so I felt very comfortable in their company. If they're interested, they'll make the move. That's what I found out.



TENSION IN MARRAKECH

Pallenberg and Richards had cheated on Jones while he was hospitalized for pneumonia, and now Keith and Anita "were pretending to barely know each other."

So Anita made the first move. I just could not put the make on my friend's girl, even though he'd become an asshole, to Anita too. It's the Sir Galahad in me. Anita was beautiful too. And we got closer and closer and then suddenly, without her old man, she had the balls to break the ice and say fuck it. In the back of the Bentley, somewhere between Barcelona and Valencia, Anita and I looked at each other, and the tension was so high in the back seat, the next thing I know she's giving me a blow job. The tension broke then. Phew. And suddenly we're together. You don't talk a lot when that shit hits you. Without even saying things, you have the feeling, the great sense of relief that something has been resolved.

It was February. And in Spain it was early spring. Going through England and France it was pretty chilly, it was winter. We got over the Pyrenees and within half an hour, already it was spring, and by the time we got to Valencia, it was summer. I still remember the smell of the orange trees in Valencia. When you get laid with Anita Pallenberg for the first time, you remember things. We stopped in Valencia overnight and checked in as Count and Countess Zigenpuss, and that was the first time I made love to Anita. And from Algeciras, where we checked in as Count and Countess Castiglione, we took the ferry and the car over to Tangier to the El Minzah Hotel. We were greeted there by a bundle of telegrams from Brian ordering Anita to come back

and collect him. But we weren't going anywhere except the Casbah. For a week or so, it's boinky boinky boinky and we're randy as rabbits, but we're also wondering how we're going to deal with it. Because we were expecting Brian in Tangier. We were both, I remember, trying to be polite, at least for each other's benefit. "When Brian gets to Tangier, we'll do this and that." And at the same time that was the last thing on our minds. The truth was, "Oh, God. Brian's going to turn up in Tangier and then we've got to start to play a fucking game." We realized we were creating "an unmanageable situation," maybe threatening the survival of the band. We decided to pull back, to make a strategic retreat. Anita didn't want to abandon Brian. Didn't want to go, tears and crying. She was worried about the effect on the group – that this was the big betrayal and it might bring it all down.

We visited Achmed, a legendary hashish dealer. His shop was on the stairs, called the Escalier Waller, going down from the Minzah, little one-story shops that backed onto the Minzah gardens.

Achmed started off with one shop, then he had two above it. There were steps between them – internally, it was a bit of a labyrinth – and the higher ones just had a few brass beds with gaudy-colored velvet mattresses on them, on which one could, having smoked a lot of dope, pass out for a day or two. And then you'd come in and he'd give you some more dope to make you more passed out. It was almost like a basement, and it was hung with all of the wonders of the East, caf-tans, rugs and beautiful lanterns... Aladdin's cave. It was a shack, but he made it look like a palace.

Achmed Hole-in-Head, we used to call him, because he said his prayers so often he had a hole in the middle of his forehead. He was a good salesman. First thing, he gets the mint tea, and then a pipe. He was somewhat on the spiritual side, and as he gave you your pipe he would usually tell you some thrilling adventure of the Prophet in the wilderness.

He was a good ambassador for his faith and a cheerful soul. Also a typical Moroccan little shyster. But he had such good shit, you kind of went to the land of milk and honey there. And after a few rounds of this, it was almost as if you were on acid. In and out he went, bringing sweetmeats and candies. And it was very difficult to get out. You think you're going to have a quick one and then do something else, but very rarely would you do anything else.

The Moroccan specialty was kef, the leaf cut up with tobacco, which they smoked in long pipes – *sebsi*, they called them – with a tiny little bowl on the end. One hit in the morning with a cup of mint tea. But what Achmed had in large quantities and which he imbued with a new glamour was a kind of hash. It was called hash because it came in chunks, but it wasn't hash strictly speaking. Hash is made from the resin. And this was loose powder, like pollen, from the dried bud of the plant, compressed into shape. Which was why it was that green color. I heard that a way of collecting it was to cover children in honey and run them naked through a field of herb, and they came out the other end and they scraped 'em off.

That was my first touch of Africa. It could have been a thousand years ago, and you either went, "How weird," or you went, "Wow! This is great." One could say we were going round as hash inspectors. We used to do so much of it. "We must reconsider our

ideas on drugs," wrote Cecil Beaton in his diary. "It seems these boys live off them, yet they seem extremely healthy and strong. We will see."

Anita's dilemma, apart from the guilt of this betrayal and her passionate and destructive attachment to Brian, was that Brian was still very wobbly and sick and she felt she should look after him. So Anita went back to get Brian, took him from Toulouse to London for more medical attention and then, with Marianne, who was coming to join Mick in Marrakech for the weekend, brought him to Tangier. Brian had been doing a lot of acid, and he was in a weak physical state from his pneumonia, so to stiffen him up, Anita and Marianne, the nursing sisters, gave him a tab of acid on the plane. Anita and Marianne had both been up all the previous night on acid and, according to Anita, when they finally got to Tangier, some incident at Achmed's in which Marianne found her sari (the only item of clothing she had packed) unraveling and herself suddenly exposed naked in the Casbah caused panic to set in – especially in Brian, who ran back to the hotel, seized with fear. There they huddled in the corridors of the Minzah Hotel, on straw mats, grappling with hallucinations. Not a good beginning to Brian's recuperation.

We went to Marrakech, the whole troupe, including Mick, who was waiting there for Marianne. Beaton was twitching about us, admiring our breakfast arrangements and my "marvelous torso." Beaton was mesmerized by Mick ("I was fascinated with the thin concave lines of his body, legs, arms . . ."). When we got to Marrakech, Brian must have sensed something. And we're pretending barely to know each other. "Yeah, we had a great trip, Brian. Everything was cool. Went to the Casbah. Valencia was lovely." The almost unbearable tension of the situation. It's not surprising that little or no work was done. I don't remember doing or composing anything with Mick in Morocco, which was rare at the time. We were too occupied.

It was obvious that Brian and Anita had come to the end of their tether. They'd beaten the shit out of each other. There was no point in it. I never really knew what the beef was. If I were Brian, I would have been a little bit sweeter and kept the bitch. But she was a tough girl. She certainly made a man out of me. She had had almost nothing but turbulent, abusive relationships, and she and Brian had always been fighting, she running away screaming, being chased, in tears. She had been used to this for so long, it was almost reassuring and normal. It's not easy to get out of those destructive relationships, to know how to end them.

And of course Brian starts his old shit again, in Marrakech in the Es Saadi hotel, trying to take Anita on for 15 rounds. His reaction to whatever he sensed between Anita and me was

more violence. And, once again, he breaks two ribs and a finger or something. And I'm watching it, hearing it. Brian was about to sign his own exit card and help Anita and me on our way. There's no point to this noninterference anymore. We're stuck in Marrakech, this is the woman I'm in love with, and I've got to relinquish her out of some formality? All of my plans of rebuilding my relationship with Brian are obviously going straight down the drain. In the condition he was in, there was no point in building anything with Brian. I'd done my best. . . . Now it was just unacceptable. Then Brian dragged two tattooed whores – remembered

by Anita, incidentally, as "really hairy girls" – down the hotel corridor and into the room, trying to force Anita into a scene, humiliating her in front of them. He started to fling food at her from the many trays he'd ordered up. At that point Anita ran to my room.

I thought Anita wanted out of there, and if I could come up with a plan, she would take it. Sir Galahad again. But I wanted her back; I wanted to get out. I said, "You didn't come to Marrakech to worry that you've beaten up your old man so much he's lying in the bath with broken ribs. I can't take this shit anymore. I can't listen to you getting beaten up and fighting and all this crap. This is pointless. Let's get the hell out of here. Let's just leave him. We're having much more fun without him. It's been a very, very hard week for me knowing that you're with him." Anita was in tears. She didn't want to leave, but she realized that I was right when I said that Brian would probably try and kill her.

And so the great moonlight flit from Marrakech to Tangier was in motion. We left late at night, Anita and I, with Tom at the wheel. Mick and Marianne had already left. In some written work, our friend Brion Gysin recorded the devastating moment when Brian got back to the hotel and called him: "Come quickly! They've all gone and left me. Cleared out! I don't know where they've gone. No message. The hotel won't tell me. I'm here all alone, help me. Come at once!" Gysin writes, "I go over there. Get him into bed. Call a doctor to give him a shot and stick around long enough to see it take hold on him. Don't want him

jumping down those 10 stories into the swimming pool."

Anita and I got back to my little pad in St. John's Wood. We were hiding out from Brian there, and that took a while. Brian and I still had to work together, and Brian made desperate attempts to get Anita back. There was no chance of that happening. Once Anita makes up her mind, she makes up her mind. But there was still this intense period of hiding out and negotiating with Brian, and he just used that as an even bigger excuse to get more and more out there. It's said that I stole her. But my take on it is that I rescued her. Actually, in a way, I rescued him. Both of them. They were both on a very destructive course.

"Jumpin' Jack Flash"

With "Jumpin' Jack Flash" and "Street Fighting Man," I'd discovered a new sound I could get out of an acoustic guitar. That grinding, dirty sound came out of these crummy little motels where the only thing you had to record with was this new invention called the cassette recorder. Suddenly you had a very mini studio. Playing an acoustic, you'd overload the Philips cassette player to the point of distortion, so that when it played back it was electric as hell. I've always loved the acoustic guitar, loved playing it, and I thought, if I can just power this up a bit without going to electric, I'll have a unique sound. It's got a little tingle on top. It's unexplainable, but it's something that fascinated me at the time.

When you get a riff like "Flash," you get a great feeling of elation, a wicked glee. The lyrics came from a gray dawn at Redlands. Mick and I had been up all night, it was raining outside, and there was the sound of these heavy stomping rubber boots near the window, belonging to my gardener, Jack Dyer. It woke Mick up. He said, "What's that?" I said, "Oh, that's Jack. That's jumping Jack." I started to work around the phrase on the guitar, which was in open tuning, singing the phrase "Jumping Jack." Mick said, "Flash," and suddenly we had this phrase with a great rhythm and ring to it.

I can hear the whole band take off behind me every time I play "Flash" – there's this extra sort of turbo overdrive. You jump on the riff and it plays you. Levitation is probably the closest analogy to what I feel – whether it's "Jumpin' Jack" or "Satisfaction" or "All Down the Line" – when I realize I've hit the right tempo and the band's behind me. It's like taking off in a Learjet. People say, "Why don't you give it up?" I can't retire until I croak. I don't think they quite understand what I get out of this. I'm not doing it just for the money or for you. I'm doing it for me.

High Times in the USA

Fresh from making the classic "Exile on Main Street" album, the Stones hit the road, setting a new standard for rock & roll thrills and lunacy

The 1972 tour was known by other names – the Cocaine and Tequila Sunrise tour or the STP, Stones Touring Party. It was the beginning of the booking of whole hotel floors,

with no one else allowed up, so that some of us – like me – could get privacy and security. It was the only way we could have a degree of certainty that when we decided to party, we could control the situation or at least get some warning if there was trouble.

The whole entourage had exploded in terms of numbers, of roadies and technicians, and of hangers-on and groupies. For the first time, we traveled in our own hired plane, with the lapping tongue painted on. We had become a pirate nation, moving on a huge scale under our own flag, with lawyers, clowns, attendants. For the guys running the operation, there was maybe one battered typewriter and hotel or street phones to run a North American tour through 30 cities. A feat of organization on the part of our new tour manager, Peter Rudge, a four-star general among the anarchists. We never missed a show, though we came near it. The guy that opened for us, in almost every city, was Stevie Wonder, and he was barely 22.

The traveling physician we'll call Dr. Bill, to give it a Burroughsian ring. His specialty was billed as emergency medicine. Mick, who was getting appropriately nervous about people trying to get at him – there were threats and there were freaks fixated on him; people would walk up and hit him; the Angels wanted him dead – wanted a doctor around who could keep him

alive if he got shot onstage. Dr. Bill was there, however, primarily for the pussy. And being quite a young, good-looking doctor, he got plenty.

He printed these cards, "Dr. Bill," as it were, "Physician of the Rolling Stones." He would scout the audience before we went on and give out 20 or 30 of those cards to the most foxy, beautiful girls, even if they were with a guy. He wrote on the back the name of our hotel, the suite number to call. He was into getting laid every night. And he also had this case of every kind of substance, Demerol, anything you wanted. He could write scripts in every city. We used to send chicks to his room and take his medicine bag. There would be a line waiting in the room with a waste bag of syringes while he was giving out the Demerol.

In Chicago, there was an acute shortage of hotel rooms, so Hugh Hefner thought it would be a laugh to invite some of us to stay in the Playboy Mansion. I think he regretted it. Hugh Hefner, what a nut. We've worked the lowest pimps to the highest, the highest being Hefner. He threw the place open for the Stones, and we were there for over a week. And it's all plunges in the sauna, and the Bunnies, and basically it's a whorehouse, which I really don't like. The memory, however, is very, very hazy. I know we did have some fun there. I know we ripped it up. Hef-

ner had been shot at just before our visit, and the place resembled the state house of some Caribbean dictatorship, with heavily armed security everywhere.

We had the doc there, and we'd get in one of the Bunnies for him. The deal was "We get free dibs on your bag and you can have Debbie." I felt the script had been written, play it to the hilt. Bobby [Keys, the Stones saxophone player] and I played it a little far when we set fire to the bathroom. Well, we didn't, the dope did. Not our fault. Bobby and I were just sitting in the john, comfortable, nice john, sitting on the floor, and we've got the doc's bag and we're just smorgasbording. "I wonder what these do?" *Bong*. And at a certain point . . . talk about hazy, or foggy, Bobby says, "It's smoky in here." And I'm looking at Bobby and can't see him. And the drapes are smoldering away; everything was just about to go off big-time. To the point where I can't see him, he's disappeared in this fog. "Yes, I guess it is a bit smoky in here." It was a really delayed reaction. And then suddenly a flurry at the door and the fire alarms start going, *beep beep beep*. "What's that noise, Bob?" "I don't know. Should we open the window?"



ELEGANTLY WASTED

"It's hard to explain all that excessive partying," says Richards of the 1972 American tour. "It just happened. It was a search for oblivion."



GET OFF OF MY CLOUD

"For the first time, we traveled in our own hired plane. We had become a pirate nation, moving on a huge scale, with lawyers, clowns, attendants."

Someone shouts through the door, "Are you all right?" "Oh, yeah, we're fucking great, man." So he just turns away, and we don't know exactly what to do. Maybe if we're quiet and walk out and we pay for the reconstruction? And then a little later there was a thumping on the door, waiters and guys in black suits bringing buckets of water. They get the door open and we're sitting on the floor, our pupils very pinned. I said, "We could have done that ourselves. How dare you burst in on our private affair?" Hugh decamped soon after that and moved to L.A. Some of my most outrageous nights I can only believe actually happened because of corroborating evidence. No wonder I'm famous for partying! The ultimate party, if it's any good, you can't remember it. You get these brief vignettes of what you did. "Oh, you don't remember shooting the gun? Pull up the carpet, look at those holes, man." I feel a bit of shame and embarrassment. "You can't remember that? When you got your dick out, swinging from the chandelier, anybody up for grabs, wrap it in a five-pound note?" Nope, don't remember a thing about it.

It's not only the high quality of drugs I had that I attribute my survival to. I was very meticulous about how much I took. I'd never put more in to get a little higher. That's where most people fuck up on drugs. It's the greed involved that never really affected me. People think once they've got this high, if they take some more they're going to get a little higher. There's no such thing. Especially with cocaine. One line of coke and you should be popped all night. But no, within 10 minutes, they're going to take another one and another one. That's crazy. Because you're not going to get any higher. Maybe that's a measure of control, and maybe I'm rare in that respect. Maybe there I have an advantage.

It's very hard to explain all that excessive partying. You didn't say, OK, we're going to have a party tonight. It just happened. It

was a search for oblivion, I suppose, though not intentionally. Being in a band, you are cooped up a lot, and the more famous you get, the more of a prison you find yourself in. The convolutions you go through just to not be you for a few hours.

I can improvise when I'm unconscious. This is one of my amazing tricks, apparently. I try and stay in contact with the Keith Richards I know. But I do know there's another one that lurks, occasionally, about. Some of the best stories about me relate to when I'm not actually there, or at least not consciously so. I am obviously operating, because I've had it corroborated by too many people, but I can reach a point, especially on cocaine after a few days, where I just crack, where I think I'm totally crashed out and asleep, but in actual fact I'm doing things that are quite outrageous. This is called pushing the envelope. But nobody showed me how big the envelope is. There is a certain point where suddenly everything cuts off because you've been pushing it too far, but it's just too much fun, and you're writing songs, and then there's some bitches, and you go to that rock & roll thing, and loads of friends are coming by and refueling you, and there is a point where the switch does go off and you still keep moving. It's like another generator kicks in, but the memory and the mind have totally gone.

Before the gig in Boston on July 19, 1972, I got a knock on my hotel-room door that led to my facing Freddie Sessler for the first time. I don't know how he got there, but back then everybody would come to my room. It doesn't happen anymore – I couldn't stand the pace – but in this case I wasn't busy at the moment and he looked intriguing. Jewish to the max, dressed in ridiculous clothes. What a character. "I've got something you'll like," he said. And he pulled out this full ounce, with a still-unbroken seal, of pure Merck cocaine. The real deal. "This is a gift. I love

your music." This is the stuff that when you open it, it almost flies out the bottle, swoosh. And I liked my cocaine off and on up until then, but apart from the cocaine you got from junkies in England, it was street shit; you never knew if it was amphetamine. And from now, once a month, Freddie would deliver a full ounce of pure cocaine. No money changed hands. Freddie never wanted to be labeled as a "supplier." He wasn't a dealer you could call up and ask, "Hey, Fred, you got any . . . ?"

It was beyond that. Freddie and I just hit it off. He was an incredible character. He was 20 years older than me. His history, even by the average experience of any Jew who lived through the Nazi invasion of Poland, was a story of horror and almost miraculous survival. I didn't find out the details of this for a while, but in the meantime Freddie quickly became a fixture on tour. He took on the role of my second dad for 10 or 15 years after that, probably without realizing it. I recognized something in Freddie almost immediately. He was a pirate and an adventurer and an outsider, though at the same time one with extraordinarily good contacts. He was incredibly funny, sharp as a razor with all the experience behind it. He'd made a fortune about five times over, blown it each time and made it again – the first one out of pencils. He said, what gets shorter every time you use it? He made a fortune out of office supplies. And then he got another idea, flying round New York in a holding pattern for an hour, looking at all the buildings and the lights. Whoever supplies those light bulbs is making a fucking fortune. Two weeks later it's him. Very simple ideas. Some others were not so simple, or successful. Snake venom for curing multiple sclerosis. He put a lot of money into the doomed Amphicar, the amphibious vehicle that was described, in one review, as "the car that may revolutionize drowning." It never quite made it. Dan Aykroyd has one, but who apart from him needs a car that can cross rivers when you've got bridges? Freddie was like a Leonardo of sorts, but running these businesses? Forget about it. The minute it worked he was bored to death, and he'd blow it.

Of course Mick didn't take to Freddie, nor did a lot of other people. He was too loose a cannon. I've no doubt, in retrospect, that Mick was very jealous of me having other male friends. And I've no doubt that that was more of a difficulty than women or anything else. It took me a long time to realize that any male friend I had would automatically get the cold shoulder, or at least a suspicious reception, from Mick. Any guys I got close to would tell me, sooner or later, "I don't think Mick likes me." Mick and I were very tight friends, and we'd been through a lot. But there is a weird possessiveness about him. It was only a vague aura to me, but other people pointed it out. Mick doesn't want me to have any friends except him. Maybe his exclusivity is bound up with his own siege mentality. Or maybe he thinks he's trying to protect me: "What does that asshole want from Keith?" But quite honestly, I can't put my finger on it. People he thought were getting close to me, he would pre-empt them, or try to act as if they were girlfriends rather than just friends. I have a feeling that Mick thought I belonged to him. And I didn't feel like that at all. It's taken me years to even think about that idea. Because I love the man dearly; I'm still his mate. But he makes it very difficult to be his friend.

Most guys I know are assholes, I have some great asshole friends, but that's not the point. I always heard stories of how Freddie was ripping me off, scalping tickets and so on. So fucking what? Compared to the spirit and friendship? Go ahead, pal, scalp me as much as you fucking want. Friendship has got nothing to do with that. It's can you hang, can you talk about this without feeling any distance between you? Friendship is a diminishing of distance between people. That's what friendship is, and to me it's one of the most important things in the world. Mick doesn't like to trust anybody. I'll trust you until you prove you're not trustworthy. And maybe that's the major difference between us. I can't really think of any other way to put it. I think it's just something to do with being Mick Jagger, and the way he's had to deal with being Mick Jagger. He can't stop being Mick Jagger all the time. Maybe it's his mother in him.

Gram probably drove a bigger wedge between Mick and me than Freddie did because that was music. But Mick despised Freddie. He only put up with him because to annoy Freddie would be to annoy me. I think Freddie and Mick did have a couple of good times together, but they were rare.

Freddie actually owned drugstores. And he owned doctors too. He had them strategically positioned across New York, and they would write prescriptions to his drugstores. He bought a stationery business and set up this tired old doctor with a script pad, and during any one week there was \$20,000 worth of pharmaceuticals coming in and going out of Freddie's various businesses. He never sold "recreational" drugs, but he did like to give his friends the same access he had; he liked to relieve them, he said, from getting it on the street. It gave him great satisfaction to contribute to someone's pleasure or to the greater glory of rock & roll.

He would have these girlfriends, and they would deliberately dress him up ridiculously and say, "You look great!" A Hawaiian shirt and a brown Nudie suit tucked into some cowboy boots, and they'd put a bowler hat on him. But Freddie didn't give a damn; he knew what was going on. He was always trawling for young girls and groupies down in the lobby. Sometimes he disgusted and revolted me. Three what looked like underage chicks in the room. "Freddie, get them out. We're not going there, baby."

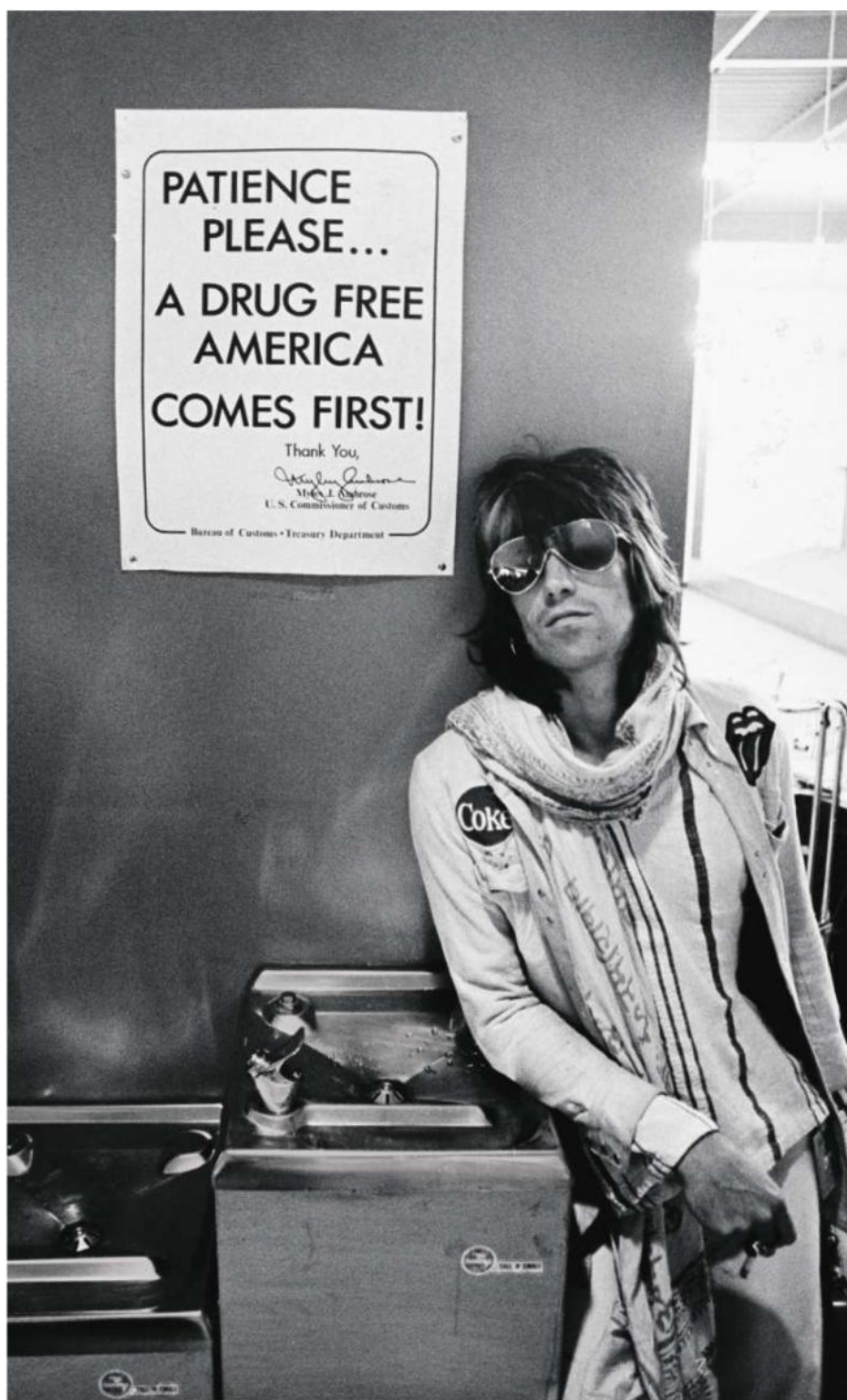
One time in Chicago, there was a big party in my room and loads of bimbos, Freddie's groupies. They'd been there for 12 hours and I was getting sick of it, and I kept telling them to go and they wouldn't. I wanted to clear the room and no one would listen to me. Get the fuck out. For five minutes I tried. So *boom*, I fired a shot through the floor. Ronnie [Wood] and Krissie, his first wife, were also there, so I knew that there was nobody down in their room, which was directly below mine. And that cleared the room in a cloud of dust and skirts and bras. What amazed me was after that, I was stuffing the shooter, waiting for security to come up or the cops, and nothing fucking happened! The times guns have gone off in hotel rooms and never, ever has security or cops or anybody arrived. Not in America, at least. I have to say I was using guns too much, but I was pretty out of it at the time. I gave them up when I got clean.

Switzerland was my base for the next four years or so. I couldn't live in France for legal reasons or in Britain for tax rea-



FRIENDS, BROTHERS, RIVALS

Madison Square Garden, 1972: "Mick doesn't want me to have any friends except him," says Richards. "I love the man, but he makes it very difficult to be his friend."



OUTLAW IN AMERICA

By the early '70s, Richards couldn't live in England or France, for tax and legal reasons. "All of these tax thieves were snapping at our heels. I was trying to wish it away."

sons. In 1972, we moved up to Villars, in the hills above Montreux, east of Lake Geneva – a very small and secluded place. You could ski – I did ski – right up to the back door.

I made a statement at that time in an interview that is worth recording here. "Up until the mid-1970s, Mick and I were inseparable. We made every decision for the group. We'd get together and kick things around, write all our songs. But once we were split up, I started going my way, which was the downhill road to dopesville, and Mick ascended to jet land. We were dealing with a load of problems that built up, being who we were and what the Sixties had been."

Mick would come and visit me occasionally in Switzerland and talk about "economic restructuring." We're sitting around

half the time talking about tax lawyers! The intricacies of Dutch tax laws vis-à-vis the English tax law and the French tax law. All of these tax thieves were snapping at our heels. I was trying to wish it away. Mick was a bit more practical on that point: "The decisions we make now will affect blah blah blah." Mick picked up the slack; I picked up the smack.

I was now put on the death list by a cheering press, starting with the music papers. A new angle. Not interested so much in the music, early in 1973. *New Musical Express* drew up a top 10 of rock stars most likely to die, and put me at number one. I'm also the Prince of Darkness, the world's most elegantly wasted man and so on – these titles that have stuck to me were coined then and were good forever. I often felt wished to death in this period, even by well-meaning people. At first you were a novelty. But then that's what they thought about rock & roll, even into the 1960s. And then they wished you to fuck off. And then when you didn't fuck off, they wished you to death.

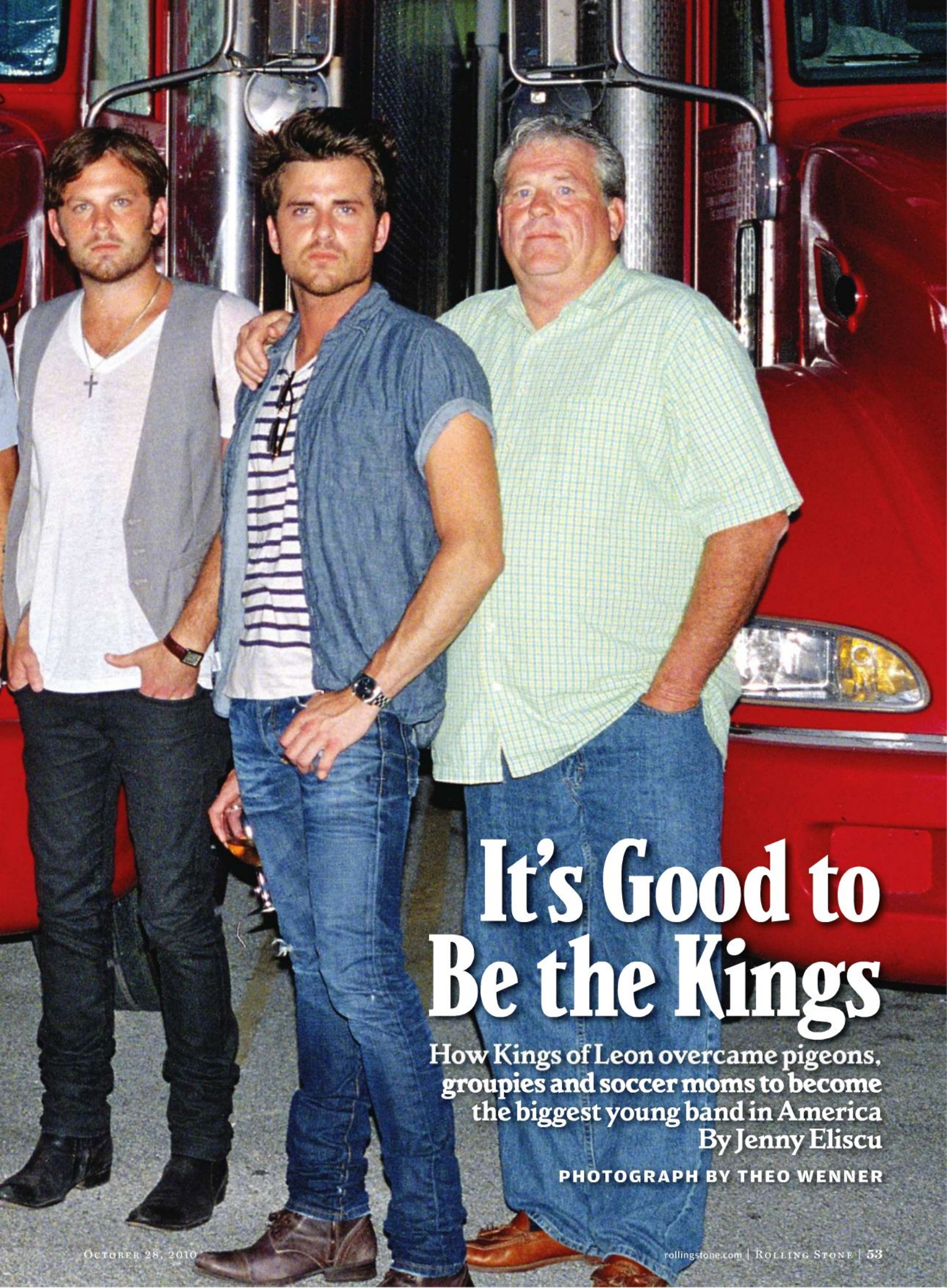
I can't untie the threads of how much I played up to the part that was written for me. I mean the skull ring and the broken tooth and the kohl. Is it half and half? I think in a way your persona, your image, as it used to be known, is like a ball and chain. People think I'm still a goddamn junkie. It's 30 years since I gave up the dope! Image is like a long shadow. Even when the sun goes down, you can see it. I think some of it is that there is so much pressure to be that person that you become it, maybe, to a certain point that you can bear. It's impossible not to end up being a parody of what you thought you were.

There is something inside me that just wants to excite that thing in other people, because I know it's there in everybody. There's a demon in me, and there's a demon in everybody else. I get a uniquely ridiculous response – the skulls flow in by the truckload, sent by well-wishers. People love that image. They imagined me, they made me, the folks out there created this folk hero. Bless their hearts. And I'll do the best I can to fulfill their needs. They're wishing me to do things that they can't. They've got to do this job, they've got this life, they're an insurance salesman . . . but at the same time, inside of them is a raging Keith Richards. When you talk of a folk hero, they've written the script for you and you better fulfill it. And I did my best. It's no exaggeration that I was basically living like an outlaw. And I got into it! I knew that I was on everybody's list. Ten years I was number one on that list! It used to make me laugh. That was the only chart on which I was number one for 10 years in a row. I was kind of proud of that position. I don't think anybody's held that position as long as I have. ✎

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Kings of Leon
with their
fathers in West
Palm Beach,
Florida: Cambo
Followill and
his son
Matthew;
Nathan, Caleb,
Jared and their
dad, Ivan
Followill
(from left)



It's Good to Be the Kings

How Kings of Leon overcame pigeons, groupies and soccer moms to become the biggest young band in America

By Jenny Eliscu

PHOTOGRAPH BY THEO WENNER

BACKSTAGE BEFORE A LATE-SEPTEMBER **KINGS** of Leon show in St. Louis, nerves are running high. “I’ll bet at least a hundred people showed up just so they can boo us,” says singer Caleb Followill. “Maybe I’ll pretend to run off stage crying.” The Kings are here to make up for a disastrous gig in July – a flock of pigeons in the rafters rained down so much excrement that the band quit after only three songs. The incident became an immediate source of widespread ridicule – the group was mocked by everyone from national magazines to Rush (who played the amphitheater a few days later) – as detractors accused the Kings of becoming prima donnas who had lost touch with their roots as a hardworking Southern rock band. By the next morning, the story had gone global. “It was on CNN, it was on Reuters,” recalls drummer Nathan Followill, 31. “It felt like that’s gonna define us: ‘Four-time Grammy-winning, pigeon-shit-on band Kings of Leon.’ It’s crazy that pigeon shit made me realize just how big of a band we really were.”

Less than an hour before the gig, a friend says he spotted a pigeon under the awning. “You saw one?” asks bassist Jared Followill, 23, who had bird shit land on his face. Nathan teases him, “It was just one, but he had some Taco Bell bags with him.” But pigeons aren’t even the Kings’ principal concern right now. The bandmates are religiously loyal fans of University of Oklahoma football – the Sooners are up two points against the University of Cincinnati Bearcats with one minute to play. There’s a TV set up in the fluorescent-lit dressing room and a spread including hot wings, beer, wine and artisanal cheeses. “This one smells like if a foot could fart,” Nathan says of one particularly ripe wedge. After a trip to the bathroom to puff on one of the pre-rolled joints (“PR’s”) a Kings crew member keeps in a smell-proof container in his pocket, Nathan cues up the Sooners’ fight song on his iPhone and does a little jig. “If OU loses,” he says, “pigeons are gonna be the *least* of this venue’s problems.”

The Kings’ fifth record – *Come Around Sundown*, out October 19th – follows the album that turned their world upside down and made the Followills (three brothers and a cousin) the biggest young band in America: 2008’s *Only by the Night* has sold 6.5 million copies worldwide. That record, fueled by the radio smashes “Sex on Fire” and “Use Somebody,” brought the Kings to a mainstream audience, about which they expressed Nirvana-style ambivalence. (Earlier this year, Caleb, 28, had to apologize after saying their new soccer-mom fans were “not fucking cool” and calling “Sex on Fire” a “piece of shit.”) They batted away requests

to be on soundtracks and even turned down an offer for one of their songs to be performed on *Glee*. “We feel really blessed and really popular,” says Jared. “But now it’s like people are looking for any reason to hate us. And I think that’s partly because people had to hear ‘Sex on Fire’ and ‘Use Somebody’ 8,000 times a day. That would make anybody hate anything.”

At the same time, the Kings’ LSD-gobbling, groupie-bagging years are fading away. Nathan married his longtime girlfriend, singer-songwriter Jessie Baylin, last year (they met by the Porta Potties at Bonnaroo in 2006: “It was love at first sight,” he says); guitarist Matthew Followill, 26, and girlfriend Johanna Bennett wed around the same time. And in mid-September, Caleb proposed to model Lily Aldridge. Jared is the only bachelor left in the band (he split from his fiancée more than a year ago), so he spends more

“We went through our crazy drug phase,” says Nathan. “But I don’t think we’d be here if we kept up that lifestyle.”

time partying in New York than in Nashville. “It’s not the best place for single people, at all,” he says.

FEELING OVEREXPOSED AND EXHAUSTED from more than a year of straight touring, the Kings planned to take an extended break at the end of 2009. But by February, they were bored out of their minds. “We can’t really sit on our hands,” says Caleb. “After you’ve cooked dinner and you’re sitting there listening to Townes Van Zandt and you’re drinking whiskey, when you see a guitar in the corner you’re going to go pick it up.”

With a batch of new songs written in Nashville and on the road, the Kings moved to New York to record *Come Around Sundown*. “We needed a change of scenery,” says Nathan. “A shock to the system.” They bought condos and settled into a regular working routine – Caleb became obsessed with the roast chicken at a favorite Italian restaurant, Nathan dug walking uptown to the studio. They’d get there around noon, battle each other at darts in the lounge between takes, and end at whatever time the alcohol-to-creativity ratio made it impossible to get any more work done. “Some days we’d end early because somebody had gotten to that point too early,” says Nathan. “There were a lot of five-day weekends on this album.”

The Kings tried not to think about singles or platinum records during the sessions. “It would have been really easy for us to go in there and put a lot of stress on ourselves and pressure to compete with the last record,” says Nathan. “Luckily for us, the first three records were not successful at all, so it’s not like we had a different mind-set going into the last record. It was just the same ‘OK, shit, we’re just making another record.’ We did that with this one as well – just do what Kings of Leon do.” Still, *Come Around Sundown* – produced by longtime collaborators Angelo Petraglia and Jacquire King – pushes their surging modern-rock sound further into stadium territory with ringing guitar riffs, booming drums and Caleb’s raspy howl on songs like “Pyro” and “The End.” At the same time, “Pickup Truck,” “Mary” and “Back Down South” have a strong country vibe, and Caleb is already talking about making his own country solo album someday. “I think being in New York subconsciously reminded us that we’re still Southern boys,” says Nathan. “It was just an amazing experience while we were there, but it sure felt good to get back to Nashville when it was over.”

It’s hard to believe that the Followills, whose primary imperative used to be raising hell, are now looking forward to raising babies. Caleb is already overseeing the construction of a Nashville home, where he hopes to eventually raise a fam-

Contributing editor JENNY ELISCU profiled the “*Jersey Shore*” cast in RS 1110.



YOUTH AND YOUNG MANHOOD

Nathan, Jared, Matthew and Caleb Followill (from left) at the Phoenix Hotel in San Francisco in 2003, the year the band released its debut album. Right: Caleb performing in Glasgow that year.



ily. (Aldridge was recently named Victoria's Secret's newest Angel, so he figures it could be a while before she's willing to let him knock her up.) He's been working on his cooking skills – though he also just cut back on bread and pasta and lost more than 10 pounds. "I can make a phenomenal steak dinner with gorgonzola-bacon mashed potatoes, or shrimp puttanesca," says the singer. "I look forward to cooking for my kids. I'm building pretty much my whole kitchen around Daddy-and-kids time. I'm gonna have a big outdoor pizza oven."

Nathan predicts that as soon as one of them has a baby, the others will follow. "We went through our crazy drug phase," he says. "We were just four penises let loose in the world. It was a blast, but I don't think we'd be the band we are today, or even a band at all, if we kept up that lifestyle. Luckily for us, we all kind of got tired of it at the same time. I'm married, it's football season, and I'm totally cool with chilling out watching *SportsCenter*." When he's at his place in Nashville, the drummer passes his days playing golf on a private course near his house, taking hikes with his wife and

eating her home-cooked meals. "I'm slowly settling into the role of taste-tester," Nathan says. "We're newlyweds. We're still enjoying not being sick of each other."

THE SONS OF AN ITINERANT Pentecostal preacher named Ivan, the Followills grew up driving from church to church in the South, often sleeping at relatives' homes or in church basements. "We had to be each other's best friends by force, and it turned out that's the way we wanted it," says Nathan. "We love each other." (It seems the dented frying pans, smashed mirrors and broken shoulders of their famously violent fights are a thing of the past.)

Their parents visit on the road regularly, and when they get a little extra money, sometimes they'll buy a pickup truck for a relative back home. At a recent show in Florida, Ivan and his younger brother Uncle Cambo (Matthew's dad, a painter in Oklahoma City) were hanging out backstage. The brothers' relationship with Ivan – who split with their mom after his drinking led to him leaving the church in the Nineties – is as strong as ever.

The Kings extend that family-oriented approach to their enterprise. The core of their crew – from their producer, Petraglia, to their guitar tech, cousin Nacho – have worked with the group from the beginning. "It's rare now to have that loyalty and that relationship," says Nathan. "But these are people that have been with us from Day One, and what makes us comfortable is you want it to feel like a family. That's our business model for our whole career, basically."

In recent years, as their operation has grown to employ close to 50 people, Nathan says they've learned to "think like businessmen." After Nacho hurt his hand on the job and the Kings footed his massive hospital bill, they realized they needed to provide everyone in their crew with health insurance. While they were at it, they took the rare extra step of adding a 401(k) plan. "Except ours is called a 420(k)," Nathan jokes. "For every joint you put in now, we'll give you two joints after you retire."

Within minutes of playing their final note in St. Louis, the dressing room is engulfed in a celebratory cloud of smoke. They were neither booed at nor pood on – and the Sooners won. Instead of rushing off immediately to their idling jet after the encore as usual, the foursome hang out until 2 a.m., drinking, passing PR's and playing ping-pong with opening bands the Whigs and the Features. Matthew heads outside to smoke cigarettes, and Nathan plays iPhone DJ, cuing Tom Jones tunes after he's mocked for wanting to play Toto. Caleb takes on a series of opponents at ping-pong, and Jared gets down on the floor so a muscle-bound roadie can teach him a punishing push-up routine.

They don't have much to worry about – except for how *Come Around Sundown* is going to be received. "Obviously it would be the best of everything if you could be really popular and still be considered cool," says Jared, who's a big fan of indie bands like the Drums and Beach House and keeps up with music blogs. "But it's one or the other. And at a certain point, it becomes about longevity."

But Caleb isn't nearly as ambivalent. "I hate fucking hipsters," he says. "Everyone talks about indie this and indie that, but would you really want to be one of those indie bands that makes two albums and disappears? That's just sad. When we signed on with our manager, we all said we wanted to have a box-set career. We'll gladly be the next generation of bands that aren't going anywhere."

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SAT
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30

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TRIBE / RIVAL SONS / MICHAEL TOLCHER / HELEN GILLET

SUN
OCT
31

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Elton reaches out to an old friend, and two songmen lift each other up

Elton John and Leon Russell

★★★★★

The Union *Decca*

BY DAVID FRICKE



The Union is a rare gesture in a dying business: an act of gratitude. Elton John

repays a long-standing debt of inspiration to Leon Russell – particularly the rowdy merger of soul, country and gospel rapture Russell perfected as a writer, pianist and arranger on 1969 and '70 albums by Joe Cocker and Delaney and Bonnie – by putting Russell in front of a classy big band, on his first major-label album in a decade. “Your songs have all the hooks/You’re seven wonders rolled into one,” John sings, ever the fan, in “Eight Hundred Dollar Shoes.”

The song, actually about grand entrances and past glories, is almost Russell’s story in miniature. It could be about John too. Both men are a long way from their early flamboyance, when Russell ran the R&B big band on Cocker’s *Mad Dogs and Englishmen* tour and John was leaping from clubs to arenas in oversize glasses. *The Union* often feels like a conversation: the two trading sober and grateful reflections, in songs like “The Best Part of the Day” and “A Dream Come True,” on the costs and prizes of a life at the top.

That exchange runs through the music. Singing in a strong, elastic growl and matching John’s piano work with low-end rolls and top-note sparkle,

Russell jars the younger man from his routine sheen, back to the natural fiber and grandeur of 1970's *Elton John* and *Tumbleweed Connection*. On *The Union*, produced by T Bone Burnett, John and Russell share the resurrection. Each goes back to what he first did best. Then they do it together.

As a songwriter, Russell is as eccentric as his voice. His love songs hurt far more than they show at first. "If It Wasn't for Bad" is finely tuned deception: pop strut, Sunday-service glow and mounting bitterness in that gnarled drawl. Bernie Taupin wrote the words to the Stax-heartbreak shuffle "I Should Have Sent Roses," but the chewy vocal agony is Russell's. When he and John trade lines in "When Love Is Dying," against a choral arrangement by Brian Wilson, John goes for the wrenching high notes. Russell sticks to his odd gritty register, heavy with turmoil.

Russell first became famous for his sharp mischief inside the churn on those Cocker and Delaney and Bonnie LPs, and he works for John the same way: salting the vocal choruses and piano-funk exchanges in "Hey Ahab"; ringing John's earnest rounded tenor with gravelly warmth in the dusky country song "Jimmie Rodgers' Dream." John, in turn, drives this alliance like the eager version of himself that first played with Russell on a 1970 tour. The Civil War tale and Band *homage* "Gone to Shiloh" could have come from *Tumbleweed Connection*; the brassy romp "Monkey Suit" would have fit on 1972's *Honky Château*.

There is an urgency here too, as if John and Russell know they almost waited too long to bond. "There's No Tomorrow" is built, with new words, on a 1966 grim blues march, "Hymn No. 5" by the Mighty Hannibal. John takes the sober verses; a pedal steel guitar lines the track like gilt on a coffin. But Russell brings the light and common sense. "There's no tomorrow/There's only today," he sings in that rough, eerie voice, just in front of the choir, like a man back from the brink and glad to be at work.

Key Tracks: "Eight Hundred Dollar Shoes," "When Love Is Dying"

Down Home and Bigger Than Life

Coming to an arena near you: Kings of Leon are ready for their U2 moment

Kings of Leon ★★★★★

Come Around Sundown RCA



In the run-up to Kings of Leon's fifth album, frontman Caleb Followill fretted publicly over his band's swelling popularity. Sorry, dude: That horse left the barn a while ago. The Kings' last album, 2008's *Only by the Night*, sold 6.5 million copies worldwide, they now headline arenas all over, and the Grammy-grabbing "Use Somebody" has been covered by everyone from Paramore to Trey Songz. If Wilco and My Morning Jacket are vying for the title of America's Radiohead, Kings of Leon have – Bono's honorary green card notwithstanding – become our U2. And the gigantic-sounding *Come Around Sundown* suggests that, Caleb's humble grumblings aside, they are thriving on it.

Listen to "The Face," a slow-fuse power ballad that conjures a stadium full of singing fans and slow-turning mirror balls. Or "The End," where the band's once lean and scrappy guitar sound becomes an Edge-like tsunami. But the Kings' personality hasn't been lost in the supersizing – the group manages to tweak its sound several times over. The fiddle-spiked "Back Down South" heads into dark backwoods-kegger territory. "Mary" flirts with doo-wop, mating pop falsettos with Matthew Followill's punk-glam rawk riffing. "Pony Up" is an itchy funk tune that surprisingly recalls Talking Heads.

Caleb's voice, meanwhile, remains a thing of slithering, boozy Tennessee beauty. Witness "Birthday." It's a slinky rocker in the spirit of 50 Cent's "In Da Club," except there's no club, shawty's nose is bloodied, and Caleb is walking her home, stumbling, laughing and spilling drinks along the way. Down-homey and over-the-top, "Birthday" recalls the Kings' gruff-sounding garage-rock days. But it's just a glimpse in the rearview by a band with its foot on the accelerator.

WILL HERMES



KING-SIZE On *Sundown*, the Tennessee band sounds gigantic.

The Secret Sisters ★★★★★

The Secret Sisters
Beladroit/Universal Republic

Alabama sisters call in T Bone Burnett for killer roots debut



Laura and Lydia Rogers sound like something dreamed up by NPR. They're Al-

abama sisters produced by roots major-domo T Bone Burnett. They dress like it's 1954, and sing like it, too – the album mixes country, folk and classic pop. They're also boundless fun. Pouring out harmonies on originals ("Tennessee Me"), spunky covers (the kitsch classic "Something Stupid") and sublime traditional ballads ("Do You Love an Apple"), they make you believe, for three minutes or so, the lie that music was purer and better way back when.

JODY ROSEN

Key Tracks: "Tennessee Me," "Do You Love an Apple"

Shakira ★★★★★½

Sale El Sol Epic

Colombian she-wolf gets back to the business of big pop



"I'm crazy, but you like it," whoops Shakira on her new single, "Loca." Nuttiness has always been part of her appeal, with a warbling voice and lyrics that border on surreal. (She once compared herself to "a coffee machine in an office.") But mostly, her new album is businesslike, serious, sane. The music blends Latin rhythms, clubland electronica and lots of rock guitar. (Check out the heavy-riffing "Tu Boca.") Shakira largely produced the album herself, and she squeezes big emotions into ballads like "Devoción." She's not so crazy, this time – but you like it.

J.R.

Key Tracks: "Gordita," "Sale El Sol," "Tu Boca"



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Lil Wayne's Irrepressible Space-Cadet Genius

Transmitting live from Rikers - and outer space

Lil Wayne ★★★★★

I Am Not a Human Being

Cash Money/Young Money



What'd you expect, *At Folsom Prison*? Lil Wayne has released his eighth studio album while still incarcerated on New York's Rikers Island, serving the final weeks of a sentence for attempted criminal possession of a weapon. But gritty jailhouse music this ain't. *I Am Not a Human Being*, which Wayne cut before leaving for prison, is a party from the start. The record opens with Wayne and Drake dropping raunchy boasts (and STD-themed insults) over a jittery synth-swathed beat. "I am not a human/ Shout to all my moon men," Weezy raps. You can lock up Lil Wayne, but his wacked-out spirit remains somewhere way out there in the Milky Way.

The album has the loose-limbed feel of the rapper's many mixtapes. There are spirited guest appearances by Wayne's

Key Tracks:

"Gonorrhea,"
"Popular,"
"Bill Gates"

ALIEN AT WORK Wayne in the studio



Young Money protégés Nicki Minaj and Lil Twist, and beats that range from the power-chord-packed rock rap of the title track to the sultry hip-hop/doo-wop of "With You." In Wayne's patented way, the songs feel tossed-off: He has a gift for making virtuosity sound casual, while delivering laugh-out-loud punch lines every few seconds. He coins a new verb ("Bill Gatin") and rhymes "fornicate" with "pajamas say," "pronunciate," "ovulate" and "time of day." You won't hear a funnier record all year. Jailbird or civilian, human or moon man, Lil Wayne is pop's most reliable deliverer of unadulterated fun. He's also the greatest rapper alive.

JODY ROSEN

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Deerhunter

★★★★½

Halcyon Digest *4AD*

Sublime sadness from Atlanta art rockers



The third album by Atlanta's kings of "ambient punk" is a beautiful bummer. Deerhunter mash together garage fuzz, folky quietude, power-pop melody and electronic clatter - art-rock experiments that deliver the satisfying gut punch of pop tunes. The songs drip with melancholy; "He Would Have Laughed" is an elegy for the late Jay Reatard. But Deerhunter make the sadness sublime. "Is there anyone who wants to see the sun go down?" asks singer Brandon Cox in "Memory Boy." It's a lovely view.

J.R.

Key Tracks: "Don't Cry," "Revival"

Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross

★★★★

The Social Network: Original Soundtrack

Null

The Facebook movie gets a creepy soundtrack



"Trent Reznor wants to be friends on Facebook" - the phrase does not roll off the tongue. But with help from producer Atticus Ross, Reznor has made a solid soundtrack to David Fincher's movie by doing what he's always done: creating grand industrial rock, including a stormy, synth-powered version of Edvard Grieg's orchestral "In the Hall of the Mountain King." It's creepy mood music for the brave new world, where all "friends" are virtual.

J.R.

Key Tracks: "In Motion," "In the Hall of the Mountain King"

Hank Williams

★★★★½

The Complete Mother's Best Recordings... Plus! *Time Life*

Amazing set of largely unreleased Hank



Taped at Nashville's WSM radio in 1951, these early-morning broadcasts (each 15 minutes long) reveal a wonderfully relaxed Hank Williams: He jokes around, promotes Mother's Best Flour and delivers spine-tingling performances of both old hymns and classic originals like "Hey, Good Lookin'" and "California Zephyr." In all, 72 radio shows never before released in their entirety, adding up to 18 hours of down-home entertainment. A feast.

MARK KEMP

Key Tracks: "Hey, Good Lookin'," "California Zephyr"

FASTER

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TOP SINGLES

Steven Tyler

★★★★

"Love Lives" *YouTube*

Tyler recorded his first solo single for *Space Battleship Yamato*, a Japanese sci-fi film set in 2199. But the song is stuck in 1997: It's a ballad with an orchestral sound so big you can see spaceships explode while lovers embrace. It's no "Dream On," and it's not quite "I Don't Want to Miss a Thing." Let's hope Tyler saved the rockers for Aerosmith's next LP. **PATRICK DOYLE**

Brian Eno

★★★★½

"2 Forms of Anger"

Leaked

This taste of Eno's new album nearly conflates his entire oeuvre: There's ambient drift, murky, data-storm rhythms and art-punk rave-up. Anger from the guru of chill? Bring it on. **WILL HERMES**

John Legend and the Roots

★★★★

"Wake Up" *YouTube*

Legend and the Roots recorded Arcade Fire's anthem for their LP *Wake Up!*, but it didn't make the cut. This live version suggests why: Legend's vocals miss Win Butler's cracked frailty, and the groove refuses to swing. But it's cool to hear the song becoming a 21st-century standard. **W.H.**

Bright Eyes

★★★★½

"Coyote Song" *thesoundstrike.net*

A benefit single for the victims of Arizona's immigration laws, this protest song (about a lover stuck in Mexico) is as pretty as it is angry. **ERIC MAGNUSON**



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Kanye performs at Yankee Stadium.

Kanye's Dizzying Folk-Rap Bender

Kanye West feat. Bon Iver and Gil Scott-Heron ★★★★★ "Lost in the World" *Leaked*

The latest leak from Camp Kanye is less a song than an inspired chunk of Nineties-style DJ mixology. It begins with Bon Iver – the Wisconsin-bred folkie who collaborated on nine songs for West's upcoming album – singing a revamped version of "Woods," his haunting, Auto-Tuned meditation from 2009. Vocal rounds swell into a gospel chorus, fat 4/4 drums kick on, and there's Kanye pledging, "If we die in each other's arms/Still get laid in the af-

terlife." (*Très romantique!*) Then, Kanye peels away the lushness, switching to a conga beat and sampling Gil Scott-Heron's 1970 "Comment #1" at length. Scott-Heron's radical poetics about a nation "now blood and tears instead of milk and honey" are a perfect contrast to the gorgeous heartbreak of Bon Iver, and overall, "Lost in the World" is the sound of a hip-hop icon on a wild creative bender: dizzying, sometimes baffling, perpetually spectacular. **W.H.**

Elvis vs. the Vampire Squid

Elvis Costello ★★★★★½

"National Ransom" *Leaked*

Wall Street deserves abuse in all forms, and on the title track from his upcoming T Bone Burnett-produced album, Costello delivers a punk-blues indictment of Goldman Sachs culture. "National Ransom" mixes rootsy stomp with squealing guitars, as Costello invokes the 1929 stock-market crash, rails against financial "hocus-pocus" and ends with a dire summation of the way we live now: "We're working every day, paying off the national ransom." The result is a fierce rocker that revamps Elvis' sound while reviving that classic Costello anger. **E.M.**

Taylor Crashes a Wedding

Taylor Swift ★★★★★

"Speak Now" *iTunes*

Taylor repurposes the "she wears short skirts" melody from "You Belong With Me" in order to bust up a wedding, *Graduate*-style. But freeing the man of her dreams from bad-marriage hell is almost an afterthought on "Speak Now"; the real fun is listening to her unload her simile nail gun at the disgustingly perfect bride-to-be – a mean girl who "floats down the aisle like a pageant queen" in a "gown shaped like a pastry." And all of it comes off catchy as heck and cute as a button. The girl knows how to spin hate into cotton candy. **JON DOLAN**

BOOTLEG

Ozzy Osbourne

Megasport Sports Palace, Moscow, September 13th

Ozzy Osbourne is ostensibly on tour to support his new album, *Scream*, but on this Moscow stop, he plays only a single song from the disc – the grating "Let Me Hear You Scream." The rest of the show is the kind of hits-filled spectacle Ozzy has done for years, with one main difference: new guitarist Gus G., who's very effective at filling the big shoes of axmen like Tony Iommi and Randy Rhoads. Ozzy revives five of the eight songs on Black Sabbath's *Paranoid*, including "Rat Salad." At 61, Oz's voice is cracking, but "Paranoid" sounds nearly as scary and powerful as it did in 1970. **ANDY GREENE**



Muse

Viejas Arena, San Diego, September 22nd

Muse have been playing enormous venues in Europe for nearly a decade, so when the band broke through in the States last year, it was more than ready for U.S. arenas. The trio barely address the crowd here, but their epic mix of Queen, Rush and U2 thrills the audience, particularly during a "Knights of Cydonia" finale that would've made Freddie Mercury proud. **A.G.**

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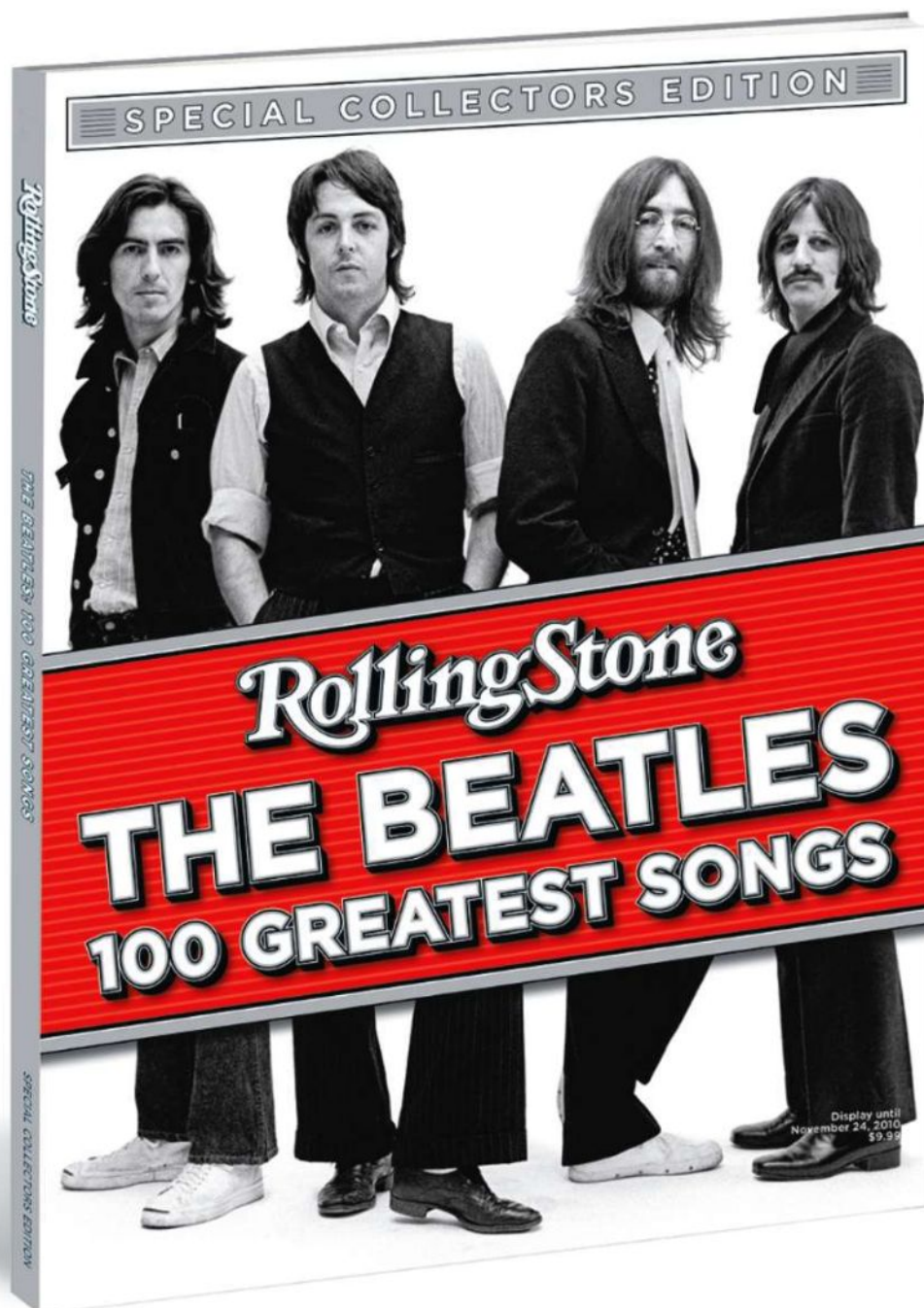


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The New Sound of Old Dylan

Unreleased demos and mono mixes let you hear him again for the first time

Bob Dylan

★★★★★^{1/2} The Bootleg Series, Vol. 9: The Witmark Demos: 1962-1964 Columbia

★★★★★ The Original Mono Recordings Columbia



"Let's just put this one down for kicks," Bob Dylan says as he strums "All Over You," and that sums up the spirit of the fabled *Witmark Demos*. It's the latest in his astounding Bootleg Series – the 1962-1964 publishing demos, just Dylan and his guitar trying out songs. Over two discs, you can hear him outgrow folkly purity and leap into the wild, madcap menace of rock & roll – which means you can hear him turn into Bob Dylan.

Fifteen of the tracks have never been released, including cult faves like the hobo ramble "Walkin' Down the Line" and the sex romp "All Over You." No matter how well you know the definitive versions, the demos offer surprises. "Boots of Spanish Leather" has never sounded so defeated – as if Dylan actually talked that girl into staying and now wishes he'd let her sail off to Barcelona.

As he plays the intro, he announces, "This imposes a real problem. 'Impose,' is that the right word? *Supposes* a real problem." But like all of Dylan's greatest work, *The Witmark Demos* impose and suppose at the same time – that's why they remain so fresh.

The Original Mono Recordings, which collects Dylan's first eight albums, is a real shock. In mono, all kinds of details jump out: the bass all over *Blonde on Blonde*, the piano on "Like a Rolling Stone," the weird chuckle at the end of "Desolation Row." Every Dylan freak should hear the mono *John Wesley Harding*. In "I Am a Lonesome Hobo," the rhythm section trails the singer down the street, like it's waiting for him to drop dead so they can steal his boots. Dylan's scariest album? It now sounds even scarier.

Key Tracks:
"All Over You,"
"Desolation Row"

ROB SHEFFIELD



FREEWHEELIN'
Dylan in 1966

Serj Tankian

★★★^{1/2}

Imperfect Harmonies

Serjical Strike/Reprise

System of a Down frontman gets even artier



"Here's my song for the free/No, it's not about praise and publicity," Serj Tankian sings. He ain't kidding: Serj Tankian is beholden to no master beyond his own outsize ambitions. The System of a Down frontman's second solo disc sets lefty harangues ("Corporateocracy, what a hypocrisy!") to symphonic, electronically tinged prog-rock that makes SOAD's wildest metal moments seem almost Bieber-esque. Tankian's constant (and erratic) genre-busting can be tiring. But his happily maniacal, syllable-drunk delivery gives songs like "Left of Center" a harried urgency, as do filaments of Armenian folk, which evoke the singer's embattled ethnic heritage. On *Imperfect Harmonies*, that frenetic sense of border-crossing is the clearest connection between Tankian's beloved band and his strange new freedom.

JON DOLAN

Key Tracks: "Borders Are," "Left of Center"

ROLLING STONE (ISSN 0035-791X) is published biweekly except for the first issue in July and at year's end, when two issues are combined and published as double issues, by Wenner Media LLC, 1290 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10104-0298. The entire contents of ROLLING STONE are copyright © 2010 by ROLLING STONE LLC, and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without written permission. All rights are reserved. Canadian Goods and Service Tax Registration No. R125041855. International Publications Mail Sales Product Agreement No. 450553. The subscription price is \$39.96 for one year. The Canadian subscription price is \$52.00 for one year, including GST, payable in advance. Canadian Postmaster: Send address changes and returns to P.O. Box 63, Malton CFC, Mississauga, Ontario L4T 3B5. The foreign subscription price is \$80.00 for one year, payable in advance. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Canada Post publication agreement #40683192. Postmaster: Send address changes to ROLLING STONE Customer Service, P.O. Box 6003, Harlan, IA 51593-1503.

VIDEO GAMES

**Guitar Hero: Warriors of Rock** ★★½

Activision

After spending the past few years chasing *Rock Band* (with *Guitar Hero World Tour*) and trying new wrinkles (*DJ Hero*), *Guitar Hero* returns to its ax-shredding roots. *Warriors of Rock* caters to the game's original metalhead fan base with heavy Eighties classics, alt-rock hits and the ultimate guitar-geek centerpiece, Rush's 1976 prog epic *2112*. You rock your way through a new "Quest Mode" to earn the right to tackle *2112*, which is broken into seven suites with between-song narration from the band. (You also get to shred the Rush tunes in psychedelic settings like a temple and in front of the Rush starman.) The deluxe bundle includes a gray-flame guitar with an easier controller bar, but that's as wild as things get; otherwise the set list leans heavily on modern hard rock like Linkin Park, Drowning Pool and Nickelback. **PATRICK DOYLE**

**Rock Band 3** ★★★★★½ MTV Games

Rock Band is going in the other direction from *Guitar Hero*, with an ambitious third installment that adds two new instruments: a keytar and a revamped guitar simulator. The "Pro" guitar has 102 buttons and chord positioning that's the same as on a real six-string. Theoretically, this gives actual guitarists an advantage, though it's a struggle to hit one of six tiny buttons on each fret. But the 25-key keyboard is a blast, opening up a synth-friendly world, with songs like J. Geils Band's "Centerfold" and Dire Straits' "Walk of Life." The game also includes a three-part-harmony vocal option, boosting the number of possible players to seven. Now you and your crew can finally re-create the full Skynyrd lineup for "Free Bird."

P.D.



"AN IMPRESSIVE HOMAGE TO POP MUSIC'S
MOST BRILLIANT GEM."

Los Angeles Times

RAIN

A TRIBUTE TO THE BEATLES
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Photos by Cylla von Tiedemann

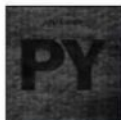
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**Pete Yorn** ★★★★★Pete Yorn *Vagrant*

Sensitive dude meets Pixies leader; rawness ensues



In 2009, Los Angeles singer-songwriter Pete Yorn released a collaboration with Omaha tunesmith Mike Mogis and a disc of duets with Scarlett Johansson. His latest, a team-up with Pixies leader Frank Black recorded in just five days, is the most appealing of the three: a stripped-raw set of guitar-driven stompers sung in a direct, desperate yowl. "Paradise Cove I" and "Always" chug along with a Nineties alt-rock flair, though Yorn saves room for gentler tunes like the lovelorn, acoustic-strummed "Stronger Than." But while Black may have brought out Yorn's inner rocker, he hasn't transformed him into a poet: "Rock crowd, throw your arms around me," he sings earnestly on "Rock Crowd." "I feel glad when y'all surround me."

CARYN GANZ

Key Tracks: "Precious Stone," "Always," "Paradise Cove I"

Die Antwoord

★★★★

\$0\$ Cherrytree/Interscope

South African rappers deliver weirdness and porn



Die Antwoord are rap's new aliens: a trio of "zef" (i.e., white trash) South Africans led by an MC with a craggy, off-his-meds flow and a pip-squeak hype girl with a crazy mullet. Their major-label debut piles up techno beats, Afrikaans lyrics and choruses that sound like warped schoolyard chants, peaking with the intense and addictive "Enter the Ninja" — whose machine-gun rhymes and surreal singsong hooks suggest Eminem's "Lose Yourself" on crank. Elsewhere, Die Antwoord get stuck in mediocre porn-rap, rhyming about ejaculating in champagne glasses and chicks with dicks. The overall effect is sort of like watching freak-show performers who haven't figured out how to maximize their talents.

CHRISTIAN HOARD

Key Tracks: "Enter the Ninja," "Fish Paste," "Wat Kyk Jy?"

Glasser ★★★½

Ring True Panther

Gorgeous debut from buzzed-over newcomer



The debut from L.A.'s Glasser (born Cameron Mesirow) begins with a magic trick. The opening "Apply" kicks off with a lumbering beat that's weighed down further by a groaning synth – but then the vocals hit, and against all laws of physics, the song takes flight. Glasser has a Björkian gift for pairing airy melodies and occasional gale-force belting with polyrhythmic, electronics-dense beats. On "Ring," her voice is multi-tracked into lush harmonies, and her abstract lyrics ("The clouds were dust, raining on us/There was a phantom me in a bed of love," she repeats on "Home") often carry a surprising emotional wallop. The album is over in just 38 minutes, but it feels like some long, gorgeous dream.

JONAH WEINER

Key Tracks: "Apply," "Home," "Plane Temp"

Fistful of Mercy ★★★

As I Call You Down *Hot*

The next singer-songwriter supergroup



The story goes that Ben Harper, Joseph Arthur and Dhani "Son of George" Harrison conjured nine songs in three days for this super-session. It sounds like it. But there's charm in their debut's raggedness: See the three-part harmonies on "Restore Me," which cut through the opening scribble like sun through clouds. Harper brings his liquid acoustic slide, Arthur his exquisite melodic sense. Drum guru Jim Keltner helps knit it all together, while Harrison, the multi-instrumentalist kid of the group, also brings unmistakable pipes: When he sings, "I'm still my father's son," it's like, yes you are.

W.H.

Key Tracks: "Restore Me," "Father's Son"

Old 97's ★★★½

The Grand Theatre Vol. 1

New West

Texas veterans revise Dylan, turn in honky-tonk anthems



"Take ya to the Tate Museum," sneers Rhett Miller on his band's eighth LP, begging a question: Why would Dallas twang rockers name-check a British tourist attraction – over a Clash-style guitar stomp, no less? It's because the Old 97's have always been Anglophiles, and 15 years into their career, they're past genre-tweaking – they're lifers writing for keeps. Bob Dylan may have recognized as much when he greenlighted Miller's inspired rewrite of "Desolation Row" (the carpe diem warning "Champaign, Illinois"). But this multivolume project will still trigger honky-tonk mosh pits: See "A State of Texas," which suggests you can be true to your roots even when you've outgrown them.

W.H.

Key Tracks: "A State of Texas," "Champaign, Illinois"

Various Artists ★★★½

Blow Your Head Vol. 1: Diplo Presents Dubstep

Mad Decent/Downtown

A guided tour of a bass-crazy dance genre



The fat, squishy bass blasts on Britney's 2007 "Freakshow" were many listeners' first exposure to the sounds of dubstep, the U.K. style favoring syncopated beats and huge low-end. Now, M.I.A. producer Diplo has put together a dubstep party platter: His jam with Lil Jon ("U Don't Like Me") is positively unhinged, while U.K. producers Benga and Zomby represent for the style's experimental side. Elsewhere, Stenchman's remix of "Burn" by *Australian Idol* diva Jessica Mauboy posits how dubstep could rescue modern R&B from groove tedium.

W.H.

Key Tracks: "U Don't Like Me," "Burn," "26 Basslines"

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KICK ASS
A fat guy (Preston Lacy) gets hit with a gut pass from Team Jackass.

Secondhand Shocks

'Jackass' is still demented fun, but after 10 years even 3D can't restore the fresh outrage

Jackass 3D

★★★½

Johnny Knoxville, Steve-O, Bam Margera

Directed by Jeff Tremaine

PICTURE THIS: A fart-powdered paper party whistle sticking out of a guy's bare ass and aimed straight at you. That's 3D, baby. James Cameron never had the balls to try that in *Avatar*. And the Na'vi could only wish they invented "The Poo Cocktail Supreme," in which Steve-O is strapped into a fully loaded PortaPotty and dropped from a bungee cord for a full-body shit shower.

All this awaits you in *Jackass 3D*, the third movie based on the TV series that started a franchise now celebrating a decade of gross-out glory. Sad to say, the 3D doesn't add much to the party, except for Bam Margera peeing in your face and the "Heli-cockter" sequence in which Chris Pontius ties a remote-controlled toy chopper to his dick and lets it rip. Even sadder, the *Jackass* guys, goaded on again by fearless leader Johnny Knoxville

and director Jeff Tremaine, don't seem as eager to outrage as they once were.

Maybe age has mellowed them, that and a stench cloud of bad mainstream movies hanging over Knoxville (*The Ringier*, *The Dukes of Hazzard*), a heavily publicized stint in drug rehab for Steve-O and an epically bad marriage for Margera that earned its own TV show (MTV's *Bam's Unholy Union*). Or maybe, and it hurts to say this, time has just passed

Jackass by. These grinning bad boys, willing to dangle their dicks and shove anything up their asses, never pretended to be in it for anything more than a laugh. But this group of daredevils and former skateboarders – Spike Jonze was a founding *Jackass* father – always had a subversive agenda. By using physical comedy out of silent movies and offering up their own flesh, blood and sinew, they invented their own kind of performance art, an Olympics

of body horror meant to force a visceral response. If you puked watching them puke, so much the better. Stunts evoked the surrealist art of Salvador Dalí and the film experiments of Luis Buñuel (*Jackass Number Two* name-checks Buñuel's *Un Chien Andalou*, which showed a woman's eye being sliced by a razor) and David Cronenberg (look carefully at *Scanners*, *Videodrome* and *Naked Lunch*). Better yet, they evoked man's need to climb mountains, jump off cliffs, swim with sharks and laugh at fear. Since *Jackass* started, reality shows (*Fear Factor*, *Big Brother*, *Survivor*, name your poison) took the art out of the game and the method out of the madness.

Jackass 3D ends on a note of resignation, with a clip reel – set to Weezer's "Memories" – of the *Jackass* greatest hits. Knoxville and his boys seem to be saying goodbye. To which I can't help thinking, fondly, it's time.

Full-Bore Terror

Carlos ★★★½

Directed by Olivier Assayas

Played by the brilliant Edgar Ramírez, Carlos, known as "Carlos the Jackal," is a Venezuelan terrorist now serving a life sentence in France for a reign of terror he began in the 1970s. Directed by Olivier Assayas (*Summer Hours*), the movie crawls hypnotically into the skin of this global assassin and astonishes you with its brazenly violent and sexual audacity. It's a dynamite movie, and you can see it in the full 330-minute version or the 140-minute cut. Either way, see it. It'll knock you sideways.



THE JACKAL
Edgar Ramírez

FROM TOP: SEAN CLIVER/PARAMOUNT PICTURES; JEAN-CLAUDE MOIREAU/IFC FILMS

Conviction ★★½

Hilary Swank, Sam Rockwell, Juliette Lewis

Directed by Tony Goldwyn

SAM ROCKWELL HAS YET TO find a movie as good as he is (*Moon* comes closest). He's still looking. *Conviction* sweetens the true story it's based on, and director Tony Goldwyn dutifully connects the dots in Pam Grady's screenplay. But Rockwell busts through with a spectacular performance. He plays Kenny Waters, a loose cannon in jail since 1983 doing life for the stabbing death of a Massachusetts woman. Kenny says he's innocent. Pretty much the only person who believes him is his sister Betty Anne (Hilary Swank). No one can stick out her chin and play determined like Swank, which is helpful, since Betty Anne puts herself through law school so she can defend her bro. If you don't see where this is going, you've probably never watched a movie. Swank fires on all cylinders, and watch Juliette Lewis turn scene-stealing into grand larceny in just two big moments. But it's Rockwell who gives *Conviction* the jolts of ferocity and feeling it needs. Oscar needs to take notice.

Hereafter ★★★

Matt Damon

Directed by Clint Eastwood

IN MORE THAN HALF A CENTURY of making movies, Clint Eastwood, 80, has sent many a varmint to his maker. *Hereafter* is the first time he's showed any curiosity about what lies on the other side. It's typical of Eastwood's mastery as a director that his approach to the topic is introspective, not inflammatory. Though *Hereafter* begins with a stunningly staged tsunami, it's the quiet moments that draw us in. Matt Damon excels as George Lonigan, a San Francisco construction worker who has turned his back on his psychic gifts. George doesn't want to talk to the dead. But even the babe (Bryce Dallas Howard) he meets in cooking class pushes him. So does Marcus, a London lad who wants to commune with his dead twin, Jason (both twins are played by George and Frankie McLaren). Then there's Paris TV journal-

IN CRISIS

Clockwise from top right: Hilary Swank and Sam Rockwell in *Conviction*; John Malkovich and Diane Lane in *Secretariat*; Anne-Marie Duff and Aaron Johnson in *Nowhere Boy*; Matt Damon in *Hereafter*.



ist Marie LeLay (the excellent Cécile De France), whose near-death experience in the tsunami provides a link to George. Eastwood hits narrative bumps on this atypical spiritual journey, as does politics-obsessed screenwriter Peter Morgan (*The Queen*, *Frost/Nixon*). No worries. It's exhilarating to watch these two talents explore new ground without bias or trendy cynicism. *Hereafter*, set to a resonant Eastwood score, truly is haunting.

Secretariat ★★½

Diane Lane, John Malkovich

Directed by Randall Wallace

IF IT'S HIP TO BE SQUARE, then this racehorse movie is the ultimate in cornball cool. In telling the true tale of *Secretariat*, the chestnut stallion who, in 1973, became the first Triple Crown winner in 25 years (he won the Belmont Stakes by a record-shattering 31 lengths), director Randall Wallace (he wrote *Braveheart*) rides the Mike Rich script for every bead of inspirational sweat, including Bible

readings and gospel songs in heavy rotation. Don't care. The racing footage, with Dean Semler's cameras everywhere but up the horse's ass, is spectacular. And the acting isn't bad either. Major props to Diane Lane, who is a no-bull wonder as *Secretariat*'s owner, Penny Chenery, a Denver housewife and mom who takes over the Virginia stables she inherits from her dad and runs into a brick wall of male resistance. John Malkovich makes a delicious comic meal of playing Lucien Laurin, the trainer who dresses like Superfly and disses *Secretariat* for laying back in the starting gate "like he's in the Caribbean." Cheers too for real-life jockey Otto Thorwarth as the champion's wily rider Ron Turcotte. A tip? Don't fret when the film gets stuck in stodgy mud. Just bask in the glory that was *Secretariat*, and watch that horse ride.

THE TRAVERS TAKE

Peter Travers ranks the scariest movie moments of the decade.
rollingstone.com/travers

Nowhere Boy

★★½

Aaron Johnson

Directed by Sam Taylor-Wood

NO SHATTERING REVELATIONS dot this look at the pre-Beatles John Lennon growing up in working-class Liverpool. What conceptual-artist-turned-director Sam Taylor-Wood vividly creates, from a script by Matt Greenhalgh (adapting the memoir of Lennon's half sister), is an intimate love triangle involving John (*Kick-Ass* star Aaron Johnson), Julia (Anne-Marie Duff), the free-spirited mother who gave him up, and Mimi (Kristin Scott Thomas), the hard-nosed aunt who took him in. Johnson doesn't resemble, much less embody, Lennon, but he does catch his distinctive glint of mischief tinged with pain. Duff and Scott Thomas are both exceptional, revealing how John's relationship with these two clashing sisters marked his character. *Nowhere Boy* is smart enough not to spell it all out. You can hear it in Lennon's music, which plays in your head as the movie works its subtle magic.

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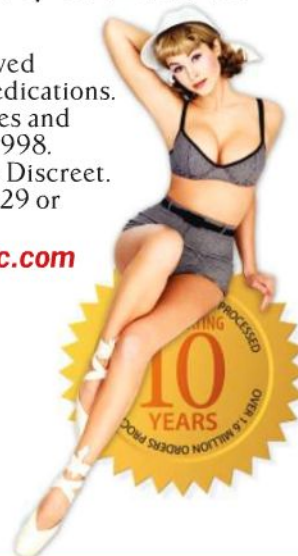
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- 1 **Bruno Mars**
"Just the Way You Are" - Elektra
- 2 **Katy Perry**
"Teenage Dream" - Capitol
- 3 **Eminem**
"Love the Way You Lie" - Aftermath/Interscope
- 4 **Usher**
"DJ Got Us Fallin' in Love" - LaFace/Jive
- 5 **Taio Cruz**
"Dynamite" - Mercury
- 6 **Far East Movement**
"Like a G6" - Catch Music Group
- 7 **Nelly**
"Just a Dream" - Universal Motown
- 8 **Rihanna**
"Only Girl (In the World)" - Def Jam
- 9 **Enrique Iglesias**
"I Like It" - Universal Republic/
Universal Music Latino
- 10 **Flo Rida**
"Club Can't Handle Me" - Atlantic

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SIRIUS XM XMU TOP 10

- 1 **Deerhunter**
"Helicopter" - 4AD
- 2 **Arcade Fire**
"Sprawl II (Mountains Beyond Mountains)" - Merge
- 3 **No Age**
"Glitter" - Sub Pop
- 4 **Best Coast**
"Boyfriend" - Mexican Summer
- 5 **Sufjan Stevens**
"Too Much" - Asthmatic Kitty
- 6 **Warpaint**
"Undertow" - Rough Trade
- 7 **Sleigh Bells**
"Infinity Guitars" - Mom + Pop/N.E.E.T.
- 8 **Real Estate**
"Out of Tune" - True Panther
- 9 **Matt and Kim**
"Cameras" - Fader
- 10 **Alexander**
"Truth" - Community Music/Vagrant

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COLLEGE RADIO TOP 10 ALBUMS

- 1 **Arcade Fire**
The Suburbs - Merge
- 2 **Of Montreal**
False Priest - Polyvinyl
- 3 **No Age**
Everything in Between - Sub Pop
- 4 **The Walkmen**
Lisbon - Fat Possum
- 5 **The Black Angels**
Phosphene Dream - Blue Horizon
- 6 **Ra Ra Riot**
The Orchard - Barsuk
- 7 **Grinderman**
Grinderman 2 - Anti-
- 8 **The Thermals**
Personal Life - Kill Rock Stars
- 9 **Deerhunter**
Halcyon Digest - 4AD
- 10 **Jenny and Johnny**
I'm Having Fun Now - Warner Bros.

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The Black Angels
The Austin garage-rock crew's third LP is scoring major buzz thanks to drone-y, psychedelic jams like "Haunting at 1300 McKinley" and "Bad Vibrations."

Grinderman
Nick Cave and several of the Bad Seeds return again to their Grinderman side project, which recalls the raw punk power of Cave's 1980s band the Birthday Party.

POP CATALOG TOP 10 ALBUMS

- 1 **Casting Crowns**
The Altar and the Door - Beach Street
- 2 **John Lennon**
Opus Collection: Remember - EMI Special Markets
- 3 **Journey**
Journey's Greatest Hits - Columbia/Legacy
- 4 **Michael Jackson**
Number Ones - MJJ/Epic
- 5 **Jamey Johnson**
That Lonesome Song - Mercury Nashville
- 6 **Eminem**
Curtain Call: The Hits - Shady/Aftermath/Interscope
- 7 **Bob Marley and the Wailers**
Legend - Tuff Gong/Island
- 8 **Kings of Leon**
Only by the Night - RCA
- 9 **Darius Rucker**
Learn to Live - Capitol Nashville
- 10 **Taylor Swift**
Taylor Swift - Big Machine

From the Vault

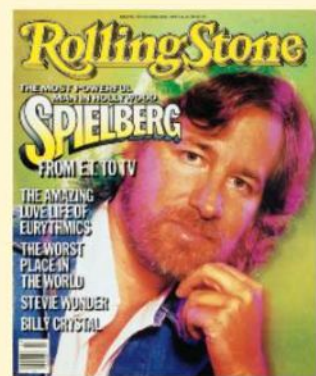
RS 459, October 24th, 1985

TOP 10 SINGLES

- 1 **Whitney Houston**
"Saving All My Love for You" - Arista
- 2 **Stevie Wonder**
"Part-Time Lover" - Tamla
- 3 **a-ha**
"Take On Me" - Warner
- 4 **Jan Hammer**
"Miami Vice Theme" - MCA
- 5 **Tears for Fears**
"Head Over Heels" - Mercury
- 6 **Ready for the World**
"Oh Sheila" - MCA
- 7 **John Cougar Mellencamp**
"Lonely Ol' Night" - Riva
- 8 **Sting**
"Fortress Around Your Heart" - A&M
- 9 **Bruce Springsteen**
"I'm Goin' Down" - Columbia
- 10 **Glenn Frey**
"You Belong to the City" - MCA

TOP 10 ALBUMS

- 1 **Dire Straits**
Brothers in Arms - Warner
- 2 **Whitney Houston**
Whitney Houston - Arista
- 3 **'Miami Vice'**
TV Soundtrack - MCA
- 4 **John Cougar Mellencamp**
Scarecrow - Riva
- 5 **Tears for Fears**
Songs From the Big Chair - Mercury
- 6 **Sting**
The Dream of the Blue Turtles - A&M
- 7 **Bruce Springsteen**
Born in the U.S.A. - Columbia
- 8 **Heart**
Heart - Capitol
- 9 **Stevie Wonder**
In Square Circle - Tamla
- 10 **Bryan Adams**
Reckless - A&M



On the Cover

"I feel that all an E.T. sequel could do is disappoint people. Nothing will be as innocent. It would be a business decision, and I am not prepared to make such a decision using E.T. as the trump card. I've got a lot of things from E.T. in my life, beyond the commercial success. I wouldn't want to trade on that just to bring in \$300 million. I would like E.T. to be released every five to seven years in movie theaters for another generation."
—Steven Spielberg

Album Review

The Red Hot Chili Peppers Freaky Styley

"A fairly outrageous bunch to begin with, the Chili Peppers raise their butt-shaking dementia to new heights of prurient rhythmic frenzy under producer George Clinton's zany guidance. *Freaky Styley*, the Peppers' first full-length album, is wilder, rougher, funnier and funkier than their self-titled EP, which was no semiotics colloquium itself."

—Reviewed by Ira Robbins

Twenty Years Ago

October 20th, 1990

TOP 10 ALBUMS

- 1 **M.C. Hammer**
Please Hammer Don't Hurt 'Em - Capitol
- 2 **George Michael**
Listen Without Prejudice - Columbia
- 3 **Mariah Carey**
Mariah Carey - Columbia
- 4 **Wilson Phillips**
Wilson Phillips - SBK
- 5 **INXS**
X - Atlantic
- 6 **AC/DC**
The Razor's Edge - Atco
- 7 **Vanilla Ice**
To the Extreme - SBK
- 8 **Bell Biv DeVoe**
Poison - MCA
- 9 **Warrant**
Cherry Pie - Columbia
- 10 **Queensrÿche**
Empire - EMI

TOP 10 SINGLES

- 1 **James Ingram**
"I Don't Have the Heart" - Warner
- 2 **Janet Jackson**
"Black Cat" - A&M
- 3 **George Michael**
"Praying for Time" - Columbia
- 4 **Vanilla Ice**
"Ice Ice Baby" - SBK
- 5 **Maxi Priest**
"Close to You" - Charisma
- 6 **Dino**
"Romeo" - Island
- 7 **Pebbles**
"Giving You the Benefit" - MCA
- 8 **Black Box**
"Everybody Everybody" - RCA
- 9 **After 7**
"Can't Stop" - Virgin
- 10 **Nelson**
"(Can't Live Without Your) Love and Affection" - DGC

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3 NEW VARIETIES

LOCAL FAVORITES

Top-selling albums for the week ending October 6th, 2010, at **Electric Fetus, Minneapolis.**



- Roma di Luna**
Then the Morning Came - Self-released
- Neil Young**
Le Noise - Reprise
- Deerhunter**
Halcyon Digest - 4AD
- Cloud Cult**
Light Chasers - Earthology
- Mavis Staples**
You Are Not Alone - Anti-
- Arcade Fire**
The Suburbs - Merge
- Eric Clapton**
Clapton - Reprise
- Ben Folds/Nick Hornby**
Lonely Avenue - Nonesuch
- Mark Ronson and the Business Intl**
Record Collection - RCA
- No Age**
Everything in Between - Sub Pop

**Roma di Luna**

This husband-wife duo began their careers busking around Minneapolis six years ago. Now playing as a seven-piece, the neo-folk crew's latest disc features hushed, strummy tunes that recall Cat Power.

Mavis Staples

The 71-year-old soul legend's latest LP was produced by Wilco's Jeff Tweedy. It features songs written by John Fogerty, Randy Newman, Allen Toussaint and - on the standout title track - Tweedy himself.

Mark Ronson

Everybody from Ghostface Killah and D'Angelo to Boy George and Simon Le Bon (but not Amy Winehouse) guest on Ronson's third album, which features the U.K. hit "Bang Bang Bang."

iTUNES TOP 10 SONGS

- Far East Movement**
"Like a G6" - Catch Music Group
- Bruno Mars**
"Just the Way You Are" - Elektra
- Nelly**
"Just a Dream" - Universal Motown
- Rihanna**
"Only Girl (In the World)" - Def Jam
- Katy Perry**
"Teenage Dream" - Capitol
- Flo Rida**
"Club Can't Handle Me" - Atlantic
- 'Glee' Cast**
"Toxic" - Columbia
- Usher**
"DJ Got Us Fallin' in Love" - LaFace/Jive
- Taio Cruz**
"Dynamite" - Mercury
- Lil Wayne**
"Gonorrhea" - Cash Money/Young Money



ACTIVE ROCK RADIO TOP 10

- Stone Sour**
"Say You'll Haunt Me" - Roadrunner/RRP
- Avenged Sevenfold**
"Nightmare" - Warner Bros.
- Disturbed**
"Another Way to Die" - Reprise
- Papa Roach**
"Kick in the Teeth" - Eleven Seven
- Godsmack**
"Love-Hate-Sex-Pain" - Universal Republic
- Apocalyptica**
"End of Me" - Jive
- Alice in Chains**
"Lessons Learned" - Virgin/Capitol
- Five Finger Death Punch**
"Bad Company" - Prospect Park
- My Darkest Days**
"Porn Star Dancing" - MVR/604/Mercury
- Breaking Benjamin**
"Lights Out" - Hollywood

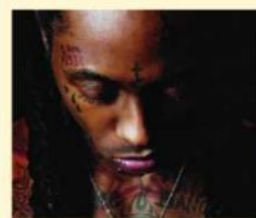


Top 40 Albums

- Kenny Chesney**
Hemingway's Whiskey - BNA
- Lil Wayne**
I Am Not a Human Being - Cash Money/Young Money
- Zac Brown Band**
You Get What You Give - Southern Ground/Roar/Bigger Picture/Atlantic
- Gucci Mane**
The Appeal: Georgia's Most Wanted - 1017 Brick Squad/Asylum
- Eminem**
Recovery - Aftermath/Interscope
- Eric Clapton**
Clapton - Reprise
- Trey Songz**
Passion, Pain & Pleasure - Songbook/Atlantic
- Linkin Park**
A Thousand Suns - Machine Shop
- Maroon 5**
Hands All Over - A&M/Octone
- Selena Gomez and the Scene**
A Year Without Rain - Hollywood
- Jimmy Eat World**
Invented - DGC/Interscope
- John Legend and the Roots**
Wake Up! - Home School/G.O.O.D./Columbia
- Lil' Boosie**
Incarcerated - Trill/Asylum
- Neil Young**
Le Noise - Reprise
- Justin Bieber**
My World 2.0 - RBMG/Island
- Santana**
Guitar Heaven: The Greatest Guitar Classics of All Time - Arista
- Lecrae**
Rehab - Reach
- Katy Perry**
Teenage Dream - Capitol
- NOW 35**
Various Artists - Universal/EMI/Sony Music
- Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross**
The Social Network (Soundtrack) - Null
- Billy Currington**
Enjoy Yourself - Mercury Nashville
- Ice Cube**
I Am the West - Lench Mob
- Jamey Johnson**
The Guitar Song - Mercury Nashville
- Mumford and Sons**
Sigh No More - Glassnote
- Michael W. Smith**
Wonder - Reunion
- Soundgarden**
Telephantasm - A&M
- Jeremih**
All About You - Mick Schultz/Def Jam
- Donell Jones**
Lyrics - Candyman
- Fantasia**
Back to Me - S/19/J
- Disturbed**
Asylum - Reprise
- Seal**
6: Commitment - 143/Reprise
- Robert Plant**
Band of Joy - Rounder
- Lady Antebellum**
Need You Now - Capitol Nashville
- Phil Collins**
Going Back - Atlantic
- Bad Religion**
Dissent of Man - Epitaph
- Ben Folds/Nick Hornby**
Lonely Avenue - Nonesuch
- Deerhunter**
Halcyon Digest - 4AD
- Drake**
Thank Me Later - Young Money/Cash Money
- The Doobie Brothers**
World Gone Crazy - HOR
- Lady Gaga**
The Fame - Streamline/KonLive/Cherrytree/Interscope

**Country King**

Chesney's sixth Number One disc sold 183,000 copies in its first week. Garth Brooks is the only country artist to hit the top spot more times.

**Weezy Does It**

Recorded before he went to Rikers, Wayne's eighth release features Drake and Nicki Minaj. It moved 110,000 copies its first week out - all online.

**Slowhand Returns**

Clapton's disc of bluesy covers of tunes by JJ Cale, Irving Berlin and others represents his fifth straight decade of landing new releases in the Top 10.

**Downward Spiral**

Nine Inch Nails' frontman Trent Reznor created this eerie, ambient score to *The Social Network* with his longtime collaborator Atticus Ross.

00 Chart position on Oct. 6th, 2010
00 Chart position on Sept. 29th, 2010
NEW New Entry
2ND Re-Entry

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